

IN THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

'So, Peter Tatchell, would you describe yourself as an attention seeker?'

THE GAY RIGHTS ACTIVIST ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

FASHION
WHAT'S HOT ON
THE HIGH STREET
PLUS THEATRE,
MIDWINTER MONEY
& FINANCE

THE BEST WRITING, WEEK IN, WEEK OUT: DEBORAH ROSS, HOWARD TAYLOR, HANISH MURRAY, MARK STEEL, ROBERT FISK, DEBORAH ORR, TERENCE BLACKER, JOHN WALSH, RICHARD WILLIAMS, DAVID AARONOVITCH, SUSANNA FRANKEL, THOMAS SUTCHIFFE, MILES KINGTON, SUE ARNOLD, ANDRIAS WHITFIELD SMITH

Man charged with kidnap says sorry

A MAN who was remanded in custody accused of kidnapping two 10-year-old girls yesterday expressed his sorrow and remorse at what had happened to them.

Alan Edward Hopkinson, a former bank worker, appeared before Hastings magistrates in Sussex charged with 10 offences including kidnap and false imprisonment.

But in an extraordinary statement after the hearing, his solicitor said Mr Hopkinson wished he could put the clock back and that he hoped the two best friends would get over their ordeal.

Graeme White, a former mayor of Hastings, said Mr Hopkinson had instructed him to issue the statement despite the fact that he has not yet pleaded.

"Mr Hopkinson specifically asked me to say to you that he is very sorry about what happened to the little girls," he said.

"He does hope they will be able to put matters behind them given time. He wishes to

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

say that he himself wishes he could put the clock back."

He added that Mr Hopkinson, an unemployed bachelor, had been very depressed and upset.

"He has not been very well but he has had two good nights sleep and he has been given sleeping tablets by the doctor. He has been in some physical discomfort with his stomach."

"Obviously it has been a great shock for him to be arrested."

When asked if Mr Hopkinson would therefore be pleading guilty to the charges, Mr White said: "There are no specific admissions that have been made. I cannot say any more about it at all. He just asked me to express his remorse."

Earlier, Mr Hopkinson, of Langney, Eastbourne, appeared in the dock flanked by security guards. He wore a jacket, grey trousers and a green crew neck pullover.

He did not speak during the

five minute hearing during which he was accused of two counts of child abduction, two counts of false imprisonment, two of kidnapping and four others relating to serious assaults. He was remanded in custody to Lewes prison for one week. He will reappear in court on 1 February.

An expert criminal lawyer, said yesterday that it was extraordinary for a man to express his remorse for an offence before he had pleaded as it could prejudice his chances of denying the charges. "It is certainly very unusual and inadvisable," he said. "I have never heard of this before - solicitors usually advise their clients to say nothing at all. If I was instructed to issue a similar statement I would probably refuse."

"It may be that he is hoping it will act as mitigation if he puts his hands up straight away but it's certainly not very clever."

Mr White made no application for bail and reporting restrictions were not lifted.



Graeme White, the solicitor for Mr Alan Edward Hopkinson, after the hearing yesterday

Paul Hackett/Reuters

Yemen seeks extradition of militant London imam

YEMEN YESTERDAY asked Britain for the extradition of Abu Hamza al-Masri, the militant Islamic cleric based in London, for carrying out armed attacks in Yemen. Abu Hamza has admitted to contacts with the leader of the kidnappers who last month killed four hostages, including three Britons.

The request came in a letter from the Yemeni President, Ali Abdullah Saleh to Tony Blair, handed to Victor Henderson,

BY PATRICK COCKBURN in Sanaa, and Gary Finn

the British ambassador in Sanaa.

According to the official news agency, it "included a request by the Yemeni government to hand over the terrorist Abu Hamza al-Masri, who is residing in London, to be tried on charges of carrying out terrorist activities in Yemen and in several other Arab states."

A spokesman for the Home Office said it neither confirmed nor denied extradition requests as a matter of course.

Earlier a senior Yemeni official expressed his anger over Britain's behaviour to Yemen since the killing of the hostages on 28 December. "Yemen is being subjected to a stream of smears in the mass media instigated by the Foreign Office," he said.

He was particularly enraged by the lack of British govern-

ment action against Abu Hamza, the head of the Supporters of Sharia (Islamic law) group based in Finchbury Park, north London, who says he is an Afghan war veteran who lost his hands in a mine explosion.

The sheikh had just said on the Arab satellite television channel al-Jazeera, widely watched in Yemen, that foreign visitors to the country were "like dumb animals; whoever imprisons them can do what he likes with them". He said

Yemen was not a Muslim state because it was not based on the Sharia. By his own account Abu Hamza had told the kidnappers to "do all you can to preserve the blood of Muslims", implying that it was acceptable to kill Christians.

The exact relationship between Abu Hamza, with his calls for holy war, the five British Muslims on trial this week in Aden for planning armed attacks and Abu Hassan, the leader of the kidnap gang

who killed the four tourists, is still unclear. But to the Yemeni government it looks like a plot instigated from Britain with the knowledge of British intelligence.

"Abu Hamza did not hide his intelligence connections," said the Yemeni official. "Soon you will not be able to tell the difference between London and Tehran (as centres for Islamic militants)."

He pointed to the telephone conversation, made at the time

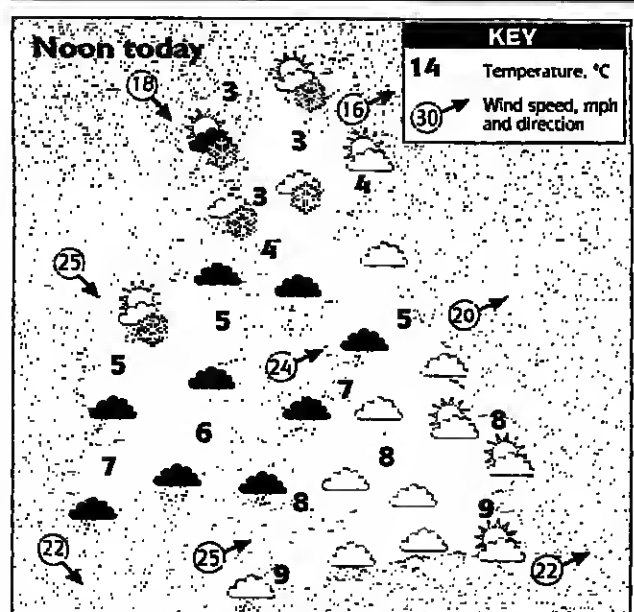
of the kidnapping between Abu Hamza in London and Abu Hassan in his mountain hideout, as evidence of Abu Hamza's role in the hostage-taking. He added that the involvement of the British group facing trial in Aden was underlined by the fact that one of them, Mohsin Ghailani, is Abu Hamza's step-son and his full son, Mohammed Mustapha Kamil, is on the run in Yemen.

Abu Hamza said last night he was not worried by the extradition request. "The Yemenis have a big cheek to ask for my extradition here," he said.

"Their economic policy in Yemen has forced the Yemeni people to resort to kidnapping to get their basic rights, so the situation is of their own making," he said.

He said it was "hypocritical" to say the least to allow Salman Rushdie to publish what he calls a dream but then persecute (the group) supporters of Sharia for simply reporting true events abroad.

BRITAIN TODAY



FORECAST

General situation East and south-east England will have some sun but it will cloud over with rain later this afternoon. Wales and western England will have a few showers, merging to longer periods of rain around midday with snow possible over the hills. Northern Ireland will be breezy and wet, the rain falling in showers or squalls. Scotland will be cold with wintry showers, but will have some sunny spells. More persistent rain and hill-snow is likely in the Borders.

SE England, London, E Anglia: It will start cold, but bright before rapidly clouding over with rain breaking out from mid-afternoon onwards. A fresh south-westerly wind. Max temp 8-10°C (46-50°F).

Cent S England, Midlands, Channel Is, E & W England: Soon becoming cloudy with rain spreading from the west. A fresh south-westerly wind. Max temp 7-9°C (45-48°F).

Cent N & NW England, SW England, Wales, Lake Dist, Isle of Man: It will be overcast and very blustery with some heavy rain, turning to sleet or snow on the hills. A strong south-westerly wind. Max temp 7-9°C (45-48°F).

N Ireland: Heavy rain for a time, but becoming brighter, but colder with some sleet or snow showers on the hills. A fresh south-westerly wind, becoming north-westerly. Max temp 4-6°C (39-43°F).

SW & SE Scotland, Glasgow, Edinburgh: It will be cold, but bright before rain and hill-snow spread eastwards. A moderate south-westerly wind, backing north-westerly later. Max temp 3-5°C (37-41°F).

NW & NE Scotland, Aberdeen, W & N Isles: There will be some sun, but it will also be rather cold and showery, the showers of sleet or snow in the hills. A moderate to fresh north-westerly wind. Max temp 3-5°C (37-41°F).

OUTLOOK

Cold on Wednesday with overnight rain and hill-snow clearing the south-east leaving sunny spells before more rain spreads into the west. Apart from the far north-east of Scotland, most places will be very mild on Thursday, but cloudy with rain.

TRAVEL

London: A12 Green Man Roundabout, Leytonstone. Major roadworks on new M11 link road. Until 31st December. Cambridge: A10 between Foston and M11. Roadworks and bridge maintenance work at Sheepen Mill. Until 14th February. A10 between Foston and M11. Roadworks and bridge maintenance work at Sheepen Mill. Until 14th February. A10 between Foston and M11. Roadworks and bridge maintenance work at Sheepen Mill. Until 14th February.

YESTERDAY

Location	Temp	Wind	Dir
Belfast	4.9/9.1	8.2/22.1	
Birmingham	4.4/9.1	7.5/21.1	
Bristol	4.4/9.1	7.5/21.1	
Glasgow	4.3/7.1	8.2/21.1	
London	4.3/9.1	7.4/21.1	
Manchester	4.3/9.1	8.0/21.1	
Newcastle	4.3/9.1	8.0/21.1	

HIGH TIDES

Location	AM	PM
Amesbury	10.3	1.4
Cardiff	10.3	1.4
Devonport	10.3	1.4
Dover	10.3	1.4
Don Laughran	10.3	1.4
Falmouth	10.3	1.4
Greenwich	10.3	1.4
Harwich	10.3	1.4
Holyhead	10.3	1.4
Half (Alford)	10.3	1.4
High Lym	10.3	1.4
Liverpool	10.3	1.4
Midford Haven	10.3	1.4
Newport	10.3	1.4
Portsmouth	10.3	1.4
Portsmouth	10.3	1.4
Scarborough	10.3	1.4
Wick	10.3	1.4

AIR QUALITY

Location	NO ₂	SO ₂
London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises: 07.49
Sun sets: 16.37
Moon rises: 11.40
Moon sets: 01.00
Full Moon: Jan 31st

WEATHERLINE

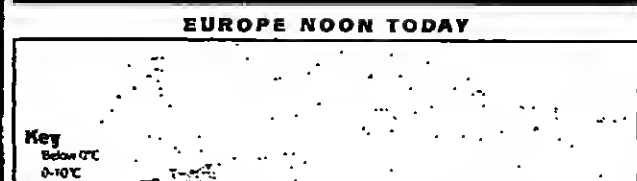
For the latest forecasts call 0800 5009 followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

RAIN OR SHINE...

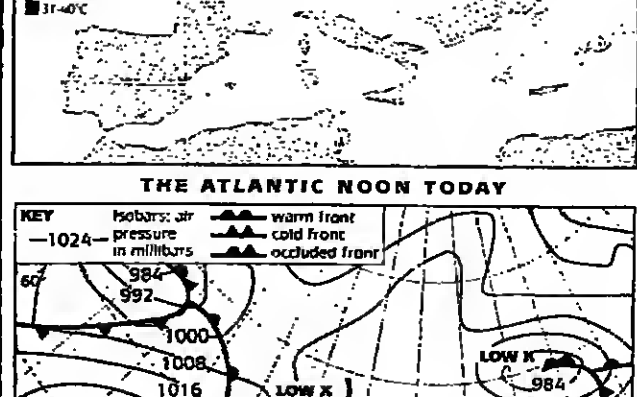
BAD WEATHER caused \$90bn (£25bn) of damage last year, according to US researchers, who planned the blame on el Niño, the warming of the Pacific Ocean, and its cousin, la Niña, the sudden cooling pattern which follows.

Munich Re, the world's largest reinsurer, said natural disasters caused 50,000 deaths and damage costing more than \$90bn in 1998, compared with 13,000 deaths and damage of \$30bn in 1997.

THE WORLD



THE ATLANTIC NOON TODAY



THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Location	Temp	Wind	Dir
Adelaide	25.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Algeria	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Amman	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Ankara	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Antwerp	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Athens	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Auckland	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Bahia	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Bangkok	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Barcelona	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Bombay	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Buenos Aires	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Calcutta	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Cardiff	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Cebu	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Chicago	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Colombo	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Copenhagen	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Dakar	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Dhaka	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Dublin	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Edinburgh	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Geneva	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Hankow	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Hong Kong	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Hull	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Hyderabad	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Islamabad	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Jakarta	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Jeddah	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Johannesburg	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Kuala Lumpur	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
La Paz	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Lagos	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
London	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Los Angeles	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Lyons	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Madrid	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Manila	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Moscow	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Mumbai	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Myanmar	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Nairobi	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Nagasaki	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Nassau	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Norfolk	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Osaka	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Paris	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Perth	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Port Stanley	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Prague	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Rangoon	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Reykjavik	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Riyadh	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Sao Paulo	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Seoul	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Singapore	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Sofia	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Stockholm	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Sydney	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Taipei	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Tokyo	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Toronto	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Ulaanbaatar	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Warsaw	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Wellington	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	
Yokohama	15.7/11.1	11.1/21.1	

'Bullied' rail staff

ballot on strike

BY ALAN JONES

HUNDREDS OF white-collar workers at a privatised rail company are to vote on a one-day strike in protest at the company's alleged "culture of bullying", it was announced yesterday.

If the ticket-office staff, clerical and technical workers at Connex walk out it will be their union's first day of action since the 1996 general strike.

The Transport Salaried Staffs Association warned it will ballot 800 workers from 1 February unless Connex agrees to an independent study into allegations of bullying.

A recent union survey of staff at Connex, the French-owned operator of commuter

services across south-east England, showed high levels of stress, overwork and unhappiness. "We have been trying for months to make Connex understand the effects that poor senior management and constant bullying are having on staff morale and service levels," said Jon Allen, assistant general secretary of the TSSA.

"This isn't an old-fashioned dispute about pay but a cry for help from staff who can't stand being treated like this any longer."

A Connex spokesman denied there was any bullying in the company.

Over 50 and renewing your home insurance?

Try Saga for high quality cover

FREE 0800 414 525

quoting reference ID 1920

Our lines are open 8.30am to 7pm weekdays, and 9am to 1pm Saturdays.

Saga Services would like to send you information on other Saga products and services and may pass on your details to other Saga companies for this purpose

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

SAGA Now's the time

Tabloid hard man sees his dreams die in the Mirror

ONE OF the most spectacular boardroom bust ups of recent years will climax today with the expected ousting of David Montgomery from the job of chief executive of Mirror Group.

Officially, Mr Montgomery is preparing his departure because he has lost the confidence of shareholders and non-executive directors. But behind that rather dry explanation lies a tale of intrigue, secret meetings and boardroom plotting.

It is a corporate battle which has set chief executive and chairman at one another's throats. It has also produced a classic clash of style and culture.

In one corner the dour, socially gauche Mr Montgomery, a working class loyalist from Bangor, Co Down. In the other, the wily and urbane Mirror Group chairman, Sir Victor Blank, a well-known investment banker.

To the victor, the spoils, is the convention in war. But in this case the postscript will almost certainly be the disappearance of the Mirror Group as an independent company. At least two predators are circling. With Mr Montgomery gone, Sir Victor will have removed the last impediment to the sale of Mirror Group to another newspaper publisher.

Mr Montgomery, a man not short of enemies in the media, was once described as someone who could lower the temperature of a room simply by entering it.

Within the industry he is known as something of an outsider, a cold, calculating figure with little time for social niceties who prospered by a combination of brains, hard work and, when necessary, ingratitude.

But his business acumen has not saved him this time. Mr Montgomery's fate was sealed early yesterday when he met Mirror Group's biggest shareholder, the giant pension fund manager Phillips & Drew, run

BY MICHAEL HARRISON
AND STEVE BOGGAN

by Tony Dye. The Mirror boss was told that he had two choices: either to go voluntarily with his dignity intact or to be forced out ignominiously by a vote of the board or at a special shareholders' meeting.

Last night, Mr Montgomery was still clinging to power and claiming the support of his fellow executives and at least one non-executive. But barring a miracle of Biblical proportions, his departure will be confirmed after a board meeting today.

Mr Montgomery has no shortage of detractors in national newspaper journalism ready to share a cruel story about "Monty". David Banks, a former editor of *The Mirror*, used to call him the Cabin Boy because of the way he "sucked up" to people.

Aside from Robert Maxwell, he is arguably the most unpopular newspaperman ever to walk Fleet Street. His talent was for cutting costs, a speciality that made him a hate figure among those whose jobs he eliminated and those whose journalism he undermined.

Yet in the eyes of the City, Mr Montgomery is reckoned to have done a reasonable job and in the early days of his stewardship he had what passes for a fan club in the Square Mile. Since rescuing Mirror Group from the ruins of the Maxwell era he has been steady progress, with one or two exceptions such as its foray into Live TV.

When he took over the share price was languishing at less than 60p. It is now above 200p and after a long period of stagnation the flagship title, *The Mirror*, is now clawing back ground in the circulation battle among the red tops.

But ultimately, cost-cutting can only take a business so far. For an encore, Mirror Group's

big City shareholders have decided they want someone who can take the business forward and earn them a better return either by selling out or merging with a rival publisher.

Mr Montgomery, apparently, is not that man. He does not feature in the future plans of either of the two bidders who have so far declared their hands - the regional newspaper group Trinity and Regional Independent Media, which is chaired by the former Conservative party chairman, Sir Norman Fowler, and publishes the *Yorkshire Post* among its titles.

After a cat-and-mouse game lasting six months, Sir Victor has concluded that Mr Montgomery has never been interested in any deal that would undermine his own power base. As one adviser to the Mirror chairman put it: "The fact is Montgomery would be an im-

pediment to any deal ... because he has decided that saving his own skin is more important than serving the interests of shareholders."

As an ex-editor of both the *News of the World* and *Today*, Mr Montgomery has not been afraid of taking the Fleet Street battle to his enemies. The Montgomery camp has had three spin doctors working for it including David Burnside, a former head of PR at British Airways at the height of the dirty tricks saga.

Lo and behold, last week-end's press was full of anti-Blank stories accusing him of making secret contact with potential bidders without the knowledge of the rest of the board and meeting Mirror shareholders without the company's advisers being present - something which breaches corporate governance principles.

Mr Montgomery will be well-rewarded on his departure. He is on a two year contract and earns more than £500,000 a year. In addition he has 400,000 share options left having already made £850,000 from cashing in other options.

Nor does his career path suggest that the media world has heard the last of David Montgomery.

Born in 1948 into a loyalist Presbyterian family, his first foray into journalism came at Queens University where he edited the student newspaper. *The Gown*, an editorship that involved writing disapproving stories of wasteful students spending their grants on booze.

After graduating, he moved to Manchester on the *Daily Mirror's* training scheme where he was remembered as a hard-working journalist who showed more of an interest in

production than writing - an early sign of his determination to be an editor.

According to Chris Horrie, author of *Live TV*, an account of Montgomery's downmarket foray into cable television, Derek Jameson, the head of the Manchester office, remembers repeatedly telling him to "piss off" after being pestered for extra work every night.

In 1980, Montgomery moved to London and later joined Nick Lloyd at *The Sun*. Lloyd was to become editor of the *News of the World* with Montgomery as his deputy but within three years Montgomery took over. In 1987, Rupert Murdoch bought *Today* and installed Montgomery as editor. He was quick to identify a new market - aspirational wannabe yuppies who wore power suits, dreamed of driving Porsches but who claimed to have an interest in

the environment. Montgomery called his new constituency the "Green Greedy People".

After an unsuccessful management buyout attempt he found himself at the door of Lord Hollick of the MAI financial services group. Hollick recommended he be installed as chief executive of Mirror Group, an appointment approved by one vote.

Live TV was perhaps his lowest point, appointing the former Sun editor Kelvin MacKenzie to churn out programmes featuring topless darts, the news bunny and a Norwegian weather forecaster in a bikini.

His passing is not likely to be mourned by journalists at *The Mirror*. They, after all, were the ones who nicknamed him "Rommel" - because at least Monty was on our side.

City seeks auction, page 13
Outlook, page 15



David Montgomery, who has been told that he can go voluntarily, with his dignity intact, or be forced out ignominiously Edward Sykes

PRESS PLAYERS



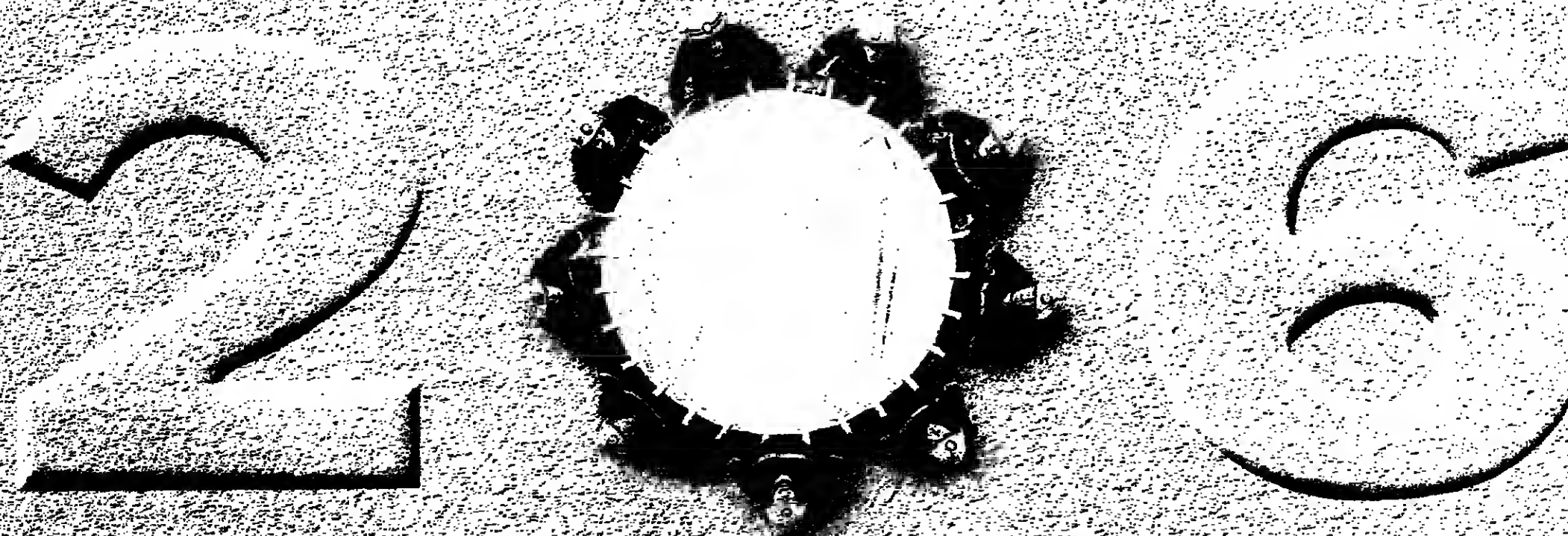
Sir Victor Blank, City deal maker and former chairman of investment bank Charterhouse. Brought in as Mirror Group chairman to find a buyer or merger partner. Concluded that was impossible with a chief executive more interested in "saving his own skin than representing shareholder interests".



Sir Norman Fowler, former Conservative cabinet minister and chairman of Regional Independent Media. Made 200p-a-share bid for Mirror Group. Questions about his contacts with the Mirror chairman Sir Victor Blank and whether he would be suitable to run a Labour-supporting paper.



Tony Dye, head of Phillips & Drew, Mirror Group's largest shareholder. Threatened to call an extraordinary meeting of shareholders to oust Mr Montgomery if he did not agree to go voluntarily. He backs an all-share offer for Mirror from the regional newspaper group Trinity.



FEEL SAFE WITH CLASS LEADING VISIBILITY, DRIVER'S AIRBAG, OPTIONAL DISARMABLE PASSENGER AIRBAG, AND THE SHORTEST BRAKING DISTANCE IN ITS CLASS.



PRICES START FROM £8495. FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 0345 206 206

NEW PEUGEOT 206
THE DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE

Cities may sue IOC over bids lost to bribes

THE EMBATTLED International Olympic Committee (IOC) faces the threat of legal action for compensation by cities which have lost out in the awarding of the games.

Facing the worst corruption scandal in the IOC's history and increasing calls for his resignation, Juan Antonio Samaranch, its president, yesterday promised widespread changes in the way the venues for the games will be chosen.

But Manchester and Stockholm, whose bids to stage the Olympics failed under questionable circumstances, yesterday demanded that they should be compensated. Similar claims are expected to come from Istanbul, Berlin and Winnipeg, all of which lost bids for summer or winter games.

Manchester, which lost out to Sydney as the venue for next year's games, has asked its legal advisers to scrutinise the IOC report and is arranging talks with other cities that lost in their bids. Sydney's successful bid is now at the centre of the latest bribery allegation.

Richard Leese, Manchester city council leader, said yesterday: "If the selection competition is unfair and corrupt then the

BY KIM SENGUPTA
AND NATALIE CURRY

IOC should consider compensating Manchester and other bid cities."

Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, also proposed financial compensation for Manchester, adding: "We need to know when Sydney hosts the Olympics next year whether the city or the organisers are going to make a profit. If they are going to make a profit, that question [compensation] does seriously arise."

Officials in Stockholm also said they would be seeking a refund for the costs of around £15m for its failed 2004 bid for the games, which went to Athens.

Deputy mayor, Margaret Olofsson, said: "I hope other cities will do the same. Maybe we can get back the costs of participating. It's so obvious that the cities did not compete on equal terms. Votes have been bought through corruption and cities that did not use these methods have not had a chance."

However, authorities in Peking, which lost by a thin margin to Sydney in its bid to host the 2000 Olympics, were last night still deciding how best to

respond. Even if Sydney is stripped of the games, Peking is not believed to be ready to step in. The Chinese government has also announced its intention to bid for the 2008 summer Games and is said to be apprehensive about alienating potential support.

Meanwhile, allegations of corruption surrounding the games continued yesterday with fresh allegations that the award of last year's winter games to Nagano, in Japan, was accompanied by IOC members being entertained in geisha parties, and receiving expensive gifts and first-class flights for their families.

It was also claimed that one IOC member was treated for surgery to remove bags under his eyes at the expense of Salt Lake City, which won the rights to the 2002 winter games.

Former minister John Gummer, who was involved in the Manchester bid, maintained the IOC encouraged a culture of corruption. "Travelling in the lap of luxury around the world, lauded wherever they went, these members of the IOC had the power to make individuals, cities and even nations rich."

Hamish McRae, Review, page 5



Strangers Greg Cordell and Carla Germaine marrying yesterday

Strangers marry in a PR man's romance

WHAT WAS supposed to be a dream wedding had an inauspicious start. The bride, swathed in an ivory veil, glided through the swing doors into the hotel lobby. Then she stumbled, almost making a horizontal entrance to the ceremony. She whirled to snap "get off of it, would you?" at the chunky security guard who kept treading on her train.

Carla Germaine, a 23-year-old part-time model, had never set eyes on Greg Cordell, 28, until 12.12pm yesterday. Less than 10 minutes later she was married to him.

The couple were the winners - or, some might say, victims - of a "lonely hearts" competition organised by a radio station in Birmingham. They were selected from 200 entrants to marry each other on a blind date.

Today they are on their way to Bermuda on a free honeymoon; when they return they will live - in a free apartment - with the disapprobation of the church, relationship counsellors, local MPs and some of their relatives, who have accused them of cheapening the institution of marriage.

The three joint presidents of Birmingham Churches Together, the Bishop of Birmingham (Church of England), the city's Roman Catholic archbishop and a representative from the Free Churches expressed "profound concern". Their letter to the radio station, BRMB, read: "Marriage should be the celebration of one man and one woman's decision to commit themselves to each other for life. By contrast what you have arranged deliberately prevents the couple meeting and reduces a sacred and momentous decision to a media event."

A spokeswoman for Relate, Julia Cole, accused the radio station of cheapening marriage. She said: "This compe-

BY DARIUS SANAI

tion has devalued something that is very important to lots of people's lives."

Emerging from their civil service at Birmingham's Hyatt Hotel to speak to the media, the couple looked more confused than concerned. "I know what I like and this is very, very good," said Mrs Cordell, tapping her husband's left hand.

"Everyone expects us to split up, but we want to prove them all wrong," said Mr Cordell, a salesman from Amington in Staffordshire.

Mrs Cordell, from Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, looked like a dream wife or, at least, a publicist's idea of one. Mr Cordell, on the other hand, just looked delighted. Like the slightly awkward bloke on television's *Blind Date* who gets chosen over two "Chippendale" types.

The ceremony had been due to be broadcast live but was delayed for 30 minutes after the registrar, David Williams, expressed distaste, saying he did not want it "turned into a media circus", a spokesman for the radio station said. The couple exchanged gold wedding bands engraved with the station's logo before attending a wedding breakfast with 22 family members and friends.

The organisers emphasised to the media how a third of marriages break up and how religion and adherence to traditional ceremonies can cloud the issues behind marriage. They did not expand on what these issues were, but presumably they include passing lie-detector tests and appealing to the tastes of the astrologer Russell Grant - as the wedding couple had to.

A similar stunt organised by an Australian radio station last year produced a marriage that lasted two months.

One BSE meal killed man

A SINGLE meal containing BSE-infected feed may have caused a teenager's death from "new variant" Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (nv-CJD), an inquest was told yesterday.

The death of 19-year-old Stephen Churchill, Britain's first known teenager to die of nv-CJD, was most likely caused by his diet, Dr James Ironside, of the National CJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh, told the Wiltshire coroner.

The disease reduced Mr Churchill from a healthy, active student to a tragic and confused wheelchair patient.

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

The coroner, David Masters, recorded a verdict of misadventure - the same verdict as a number of other coroners who have investigated deaths from nv-CJD.

Mr Churchill's mother, Dot, described how in 1994 he had a car crash in which he could not recollect how he came to be on the wrong side of the road. He became more confused, withdrawn and quiet, she said.

Previously he had enjoyed a healthy appetite, but avoided

convenience foods, though he sometimes ate burgers and liked sausages.

The family has campaigned for almost four years for an inquest into his death, which occurred in May 1995 but was recorded as "natural causes". The inquest was ordered by the Home Secretary, Jack Straw.

Afterwards, Mr Churchill's father, David, said: "It is quite a terrifying thought that one single meal could create such a dreadful disease in one person."

"This has put into place the last piece of the jigsaw. We feel the verdict is appropriate."

LEGAL & GENERAL FAMILY PROTECTION PLAN

You'd give
the world
to help protect your
children.

All we ask is  a day.*

Your family is the most important thing in your life. But have you considered how they'd cope with your death?

With the loss of income?
And the extra bills?



Thankfully, Legal & General's Family Protection Plan offers a simple, affordable way to help secure the financial future of those you love most.

*Equivalent to £6.08 a month.

For just 20p* a day a non-smoking man aged 30 could get £53,200 of cover for 15 years (acceptance subject to individual details). You select the amount and length of cover you require (within certain limits) and the lump sum is paid should you die during that period. Additional options available include Terminal Illness Cover, Critical Illness Cover, Indexation and Waiver of Premium.

Call 0500 33 66 66 for your no-obligation quotation or send for an information pack. Your family is depending on it.

Up to
£300,000
FREE
Accidental Death Cover
Call now
for more details

Minimum premium of £5.00 per month equates to 17p a day. The Family Protection Plan is provided by Legal & General Assurance Society Limited. Full written details available on request. Now and then, we may tell you about other products or services offered by the Legal & General Group of companies that we believe may be of interest to you. If you would prefer not to receive this carefully selected information, please tick the box in the coupon. For your protection, calls are usually recorded and randomly monitored. Legal & General Direct Limited is a representative only of the Legal & General marketing group, members of which are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO for the purposes of recommending, advising on and selling life assurance and investment products bearing Legal & General's name. Legal & General Direct Limited, registered in England No. 2702080. Registered Office: Temple Court, 11 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4N 4TP.

free **£10**
Interflora voucher

WITH A £1000 CASH PRIZE DRAW AND FIRST PRIZE WINNER

Call now for an
instant quote
0500 33 66 66

D3/DJ04

Please send me a personal quotation and information pack on the Legal & General Family Protection Plan.

Post to: Legal & General, FREEPOST (SWC 0467), Cardiff CF1 1YW

Surname (Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms)

Forename(s)

Address

Postcode

Tel No. Home

Tel No. Work

Date of Birth

I am a smoker ☐ Non-smoker ☐

Cover required £

Term required (minimum 1 year) Years

I do not wish to receive information on other Legal & General products. ☐

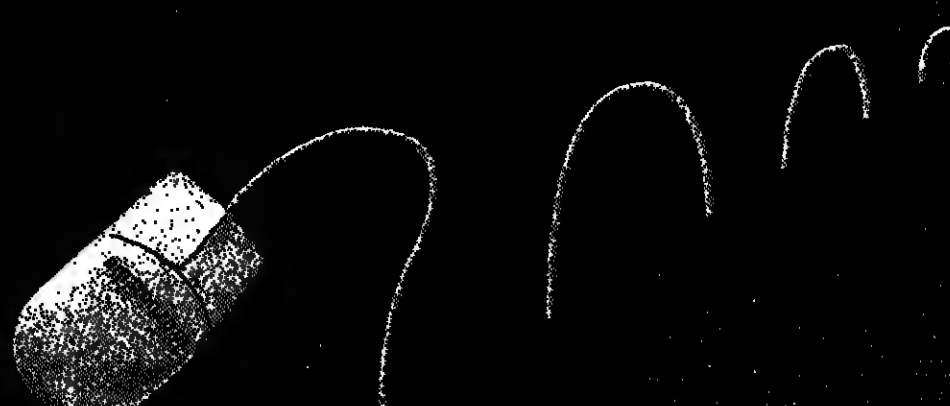
Visit our Website at

www.LandG.com



trust us to deliver

you'll find some monster
savings on books at
amazon.co.uk



- The greatest range of savings. Unlimited discounts on thousands of popular books at up to 40% off.
- The easiest way to find and buy books. Find the book you want in seconds by author, title or subject. Then order it with just one click of the mouse.
- The widest possible selection. Well over a million books every day. Most titles are available at hundreds of thousands of the most competitive prices.

click with
amazon.co.uk
books for everyone

Experience all this and more on the Internet at amazon.co.uk



The Sinn Féin MP Martin McGuinness, who stayed away from yesterday's meeting

Stephen Davison

Mowlam demands an end to beatings

LOYALIST AND republican representatives met the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland yesterday to discuss "punishment attacks", an issue taking an increasingly prominent place on the political agenda.

Dr Mo Mowlam met people from two loyalist groupings, the Progressive Unionist Party and the Ulster Democratic Party, and from Sinn Féin, which under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement are obliged to use their influence to bring paramilitary shootings and beatings to an end.

But the Sinn Féin president, Gerry Adams, and the party's chief negotiator, Martin McGuinness, said they had boycotted the meeting in Belfast because the Northern Ireland Office had "hyped it into something it was not." More junior Sinn Féin figures went in their place.

Dr Mowlam clearly challenged all the groupings on why such attacks were continuing, and on what they were doing to have them stopped. None of the parties involved appears to have accepted any responsibility for the attacks.

David Ervine, of the Progressive Unionists, indicated that Dr Mowlam had taken a

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

tough line at their meeting, describing her approach as "hard-hitting". He said, however, that the minister had not actually delivered any ultimatum to his party. He reiterated his party's opposition to such attacks, describing them as "immoral and reprehensible".

Gary McMichael, leader of the UDP, said later: "It would be wrong for anyone to suggest that there isn't a degree of support for this. People do go to paramilitaries, particularly those who are direct victims. I argue that it is wrong but that doesn't make it go away."

"We're working on the ground to encourage people to change their attitudes, to go to the police with their problems." "Punishment" beatings and shootings by the IRA and loyalist paramilitary groups have continued in Belfast and elsewhere, the latest attacks taking place not long before yesterday's meetings.

In Rasharkin, Co Antrim an 18-year-old youth suffered head and face injuries when three masked men burst into his house and beat him with clubs, in what is presumed to have been a loyalist attack. A second

man in the house escaped injury by jumping out of a first-floor window. Earlier in what appeared to be another paramilitary-style shooting at Maghera, Co Londonderry, a man was shot in the leg.

According to the Royal Ulster Constabulary there have been 28 attacks so far this year, 14 each by loyalists and republicans. In 1996, the worst year for such attacks, loyalists and republicans were responsible for a combined total of 326 shootings and beatings.

According to figures collated by the Royal Ulster Constabulary, this dropped last year to 213. Attacks by the IRA, which in 1996 amounted to 175, last year dropped to a figure of 83. Thus the security forces are dealing not with a surge of assaults but with the continuation of an attack that has been an unwelcome but familiar feature of Belfast ghetto life since the early Seventies when, for example, the IRA would "tar and feather" girls said to have fraternised with soldiers.

The Government's quandary now is how to approach an issue that has become bound up with the overall peace process. On one reading anyone linked to groups involved in such violence should be

unceremoniously ejected from the process. The Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, has signalled that if the IRA has not decommissioned weapons by March 10 he will formally seek to have Sinn Féin excluded from the new Northern Ireland administration.

The counter-argument is that it will take some time for groupings that are, hopefully, making the journey from terrorism into democracy to shake off all their previous trappings of violence. The Tory leader, William Hague, reiterated his call for early prisoner releases to stop, saying the paramilitaries were in breach of the Good Friday Agreement, and of Tony Blair's promise that the agreement meant an end to violence. "We are now seeing beatings escalate, without any guns or bombs being decommissioned," Mr Hague said.

"They [the Government] are actually throwing away their negotiating cards and we are getting nearer to a point when there will be no terrorists left in prison. Mo Mowlam should be telling them today that unless they start to give up their guns and bombs and put an end to terrorist mutilations, then prisoner releases will be put on hold," he added.

EC chief faces inquiry over property deal

THE FUTURE of European social affairs commissioner Padraig Flynn was in doubt last night as he came under intense pressure from the Irish Government to answer allegations that he received IR£50,000 (£46,000) from a property developer when he was Dublin's environment minister.

Ireland's deputy premier Mary Harney claimed his position was now "impossible" after what she called "devastating" claims by the Luton-based developer, Thomas Gilmartin, that Mr Flynn had repeatedly telephoned him since last September pleading with him to change his account of the 1989 payment. Ms Harney held discussions yesterday with the Taoiseach Bertie Ahern about the affair. Mr Ahern said it "would be in the public interest" for Mr Flynn to make a public statement on what happened.

Fianna Fail sources confirmed to *The Independent* that the cash did not reach the party headquarters. Opposition questions on the cash will dominate proceedings when the Dail resumes tomorrow. Last week the businessman reversed his decision not to testify before a Dublin judicial tribunal investigating planning corruption after Mr Flynn claimed that Mr Gilmartin was sick. This allegation was quickly withdrawn by the Commissioner.

Mr Flynn has not admitted receiving the cheque, but has made only partial denials, saying: "I never asked or took money from anybody to do favours for anybody in my life." He later qualified this saying: "I never took money from anybody to do political favours in so far as planning is concerned."

Mr Flynn has succeeded in maximising European money, including agricultural payouts, for Ireland, but the controversy has undermined his chances of Dublin nominating him Commissioner for another term later this year on a IR£140,000 salary.

BY ALAN MURDOCH
In Dublin

businessman reversed his decision not to testify before a Dublin judicial tribunal investigating planning corruption after Mr Flynn claimed that Mr Gilmartin was sick. This allegation was quickly withdrawn by the Commissioner.

Mr Flynn has not admitted receiving the cheque, but has made only partial denials, saying: "I never asked or took money from anybody to do favours for anybody in my life." He later qualified this saying: "I never took money from anybody to do political favours in so far as planning is concerned."

Mr Flynn has succeeded in maximising European money, including agricultural payouts, for Ireland, but the controversy has undermined his chances of Dublin nominating him Commissioner for another term later this year on a IR£140,000 salary.

IN BRIEF

Ford plans Dagenham shutdown

FORD IS considering a three-week shutdown of its biggest UK factory and extending short-time working because of a drop in export demand, according to unofficial sources. The firm is expected to make an announcement later this week about production of the Fiesta at Dagenham, Essex, which has been on a four-day week since October.

Connex Rail staff hold strike ballot

THE TRANSPORT Salaried Staff Association, a white-collar union, is to ballot ticket-office staff and head-office workers at Connex Rail over plans for a one-day strike. The union has accused Connex of threatening to sack staff or withhold pay rises if they refuse to sign new contracts.

Diver's fatal search for flipper

A BRITISH soldier diving on a wreck off Cyprus died while looking for a flipper. Police believe that during the dive on Sunday, John Rann, 38, from Keynsham, near Bristol, ran out of oxygen after trying to recover the flipper, which had come loose during his return to the surface.

Oxford students end fees protest

THE OXFORD undergraduates who refused to pay university tuition fees said yesterday they would end their protest to avoid being expelled. But in a letter to *The Independent*, the five students, who have been withholding up to £1,000, said they had just started their campaign.

Soya 'can cut HRT cancer risk'

SOYA MAY protect against the cancer risk linked with hormone replacement therapy. US research has shown its protective effect on post-menopausal monkeys.

TERENCE BLACKER

The rise of the Judas biography was somehow inevitable

IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW PAGE 4

Lowest Ever Priced Sony Laptop

AVAILABLE IN-STORE TODAY



24-SPEED
CD-ROM
DRIVE

12.1" FULL
COLOUR LCD
SCREEN

EXCLUSIVE*

SONY
266MHz Intel® Pentium®
Processor with MMX™
Technology

- 32Mb SDRAM.
- 3.2Gb Hard Disk.
- 12.1" HPA Colour Display.
- 512k Cache Memory.
- 24x CD-ROM.
- Sony Imaging Software.
- Windows 98.

MODEL: PCG-745LT.

NEW
PC WORLD PRICE

£999

OR £29.99 per month*

233MHz Intel® Pentium®
Processor with
MMX™ Technology

- 32Mb SDRAM.
- 2.1Gb Hard Disk (Detachable).
- 12.1" TFT Colour Display.
- 24x CD-ROM.
- Windows 98.
- 3D Graphics Accelerator.
- 4Mb Video SG RAM.

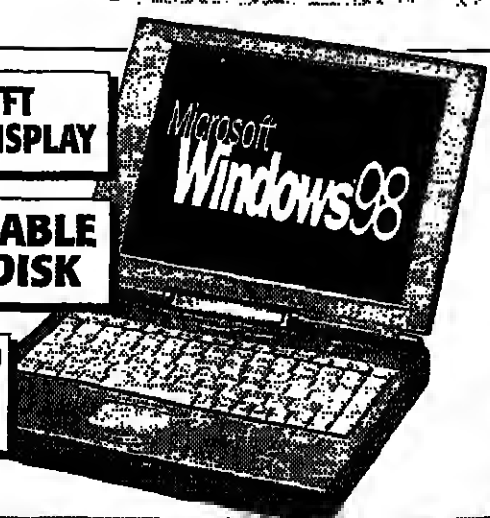
MODEL: MD100.

PC WORLD PRICE
INC VAT
£899

12.1" TFT
COLOUR DISPLAY

DETACHABLE
HARD DISK

24-SPEED
CD-ROM
DRIVE



BRITAIN'S BIGGEST COMPUTER

SALE

IS ON AT ALL STORES
FOR YOUR NEAREST
STORE CALL

0990 464 464

We won't
be beaten
on price*

PC WORLD

THE COMPUTER SUPERSTORE

APR 19.9%

*On all PCs and printers over £250. Credit Protection Insurance (CPI) is optional and will protect your payments in case of accident, unemployment or illness. CPI is not included in the monthly repayments unless otherwise stated. TYPICAL EXAMPLE: (Without CPI) Cash Price £699. No Deposit and 48 monthly payments of £20.66 = total amount payable £991.68. Minimum purchase £250. Subject to status. Written quotations available from: Dept MK/PCW, Midlands Avenue, Hemel Hempstead HP2 7TG. The Intel Inside logo, Pentium, Celeron and MMX are registered trademarks of the Intel Corporation. *Exclusive to DSG Retail Ltd.

YOUNG MOTHERS...
This mon...
M...
un...
gi...
ba...
FORD IS considering a three-week shutdown of its biggest UK factory and extending short-time working because of a drop in export demand, according to unofficial sources. The firm is expected to make an announcement later this week about production of the Fiesta at Dagenham, Essex, which has been on a four-day week since October.
But Felicity of the British Adoption and Mr Straw's ex-provocative remarks of the Redwood, wi-teenage single put their babies She admits ities were quic
THE CIRCUS...
Chip...
'crui...
THE CIRCUS...
Chipperfield...
insensitive, cr...
ruled her farm...
ial authority".
Under cross...
Andover mag...
yesterday. M...
who is accus...
elty charges...
Charles Gab...
cution: "That...
yourself - mas...
imals in your...
will do as you...
be beaten...
pence about...
pain. Discip...
god that you...
Mr Gabb...
right you thi...
fuss over noth...
A bit along th

Beware ageing Tory men baring their sexual prejudice

"YOU SIMPLY cannot have it both ways," said Gerald Howarth indignantly, intervening during the Home Secretary's speech on the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill. Well you can, of course. Indeed, you can have it in a whole raft of ways that have probably never even been screened in Mr Howarth's mental cinema - an over-heated local leopards that is largely given over to low-budget horror movies.

Showing yesterday, as MPs again discussed lowering the age of consent for male homosexuals, was that Tory cult hit *Predatory Older Men* - a lurid shocker in which a sinister array of buggers

emerges from its hiding places, released by the foolish legislative tinkering of a liberal government. One does wonder what happened to some of these members in their tender years. What scout hut atrocities or dormitory fumbblings lie behind their fixed conviction that "homosexual" and "paedophile", while not precisely synonymous, are as close as makes no difference. It wasn't all Mr Howarth's fault, it's true, though it grieves me to confess it. The fact that the Government have yoked together two entirely distinct issues - the correction of a long-standing inequity and the extension of sexual protection for mi-

nors does tend to muddy waters that are already turbid with prejudice and sexual panic. Even Jack Straw, who had the decency to place an unequivocal statement about equality before the law, betrays some confusion on these matters. "It is not a question of encouraging one lifestyle over another," he assured the House, perhaps anxious to forestall Tory terrorists that the Government is seeking to encourage more of its citizens to have it both ways. He was quickly called on his vocabulary by Ben Bradshaw, one of the few MPs who is open about his homosexuality: "Lifestyle" implied

THE SKETCH



THOMAS SUTCLIFFE

some element of choice, he protested, whereas most evidence suggested that a person's sexuality was considerably less whimsical than

that. "I agree," stuttered the Home Secretary. "And I hope he'll note that I haven't used that term." I hope Hansard notes that he had, only seconds before.

The honourable member for Bigotry East got him off the hook by shouting something about having the choice to maintain self-discipline, an intervention seconded by the members for Buggery-on-the-Brain and Molestation Magna. The response from the Tory frontbench was far more considered, touching even, with Sir Norman Fowler recalling his own sexual coming of age during the Aids crisis. There have been reports

that this was an eye-opening time for Sir Norman, exposing him to a crash course in the many exotic ways in which two human legs can click together.

Rather winningly, he referred to the jokes about his besotted innocence and confessed to learning two valuable lessons. The first was that the public wants information from government, not moral guidance, and the second was they can be mature and sensible about such matters. "We should proceed with a certain amount of humility," he said, pointing out that the party wasn't exactly in a good position to hand out moral lectures.

I confess that I was seduced - his speech was reflective and unparliamentary. It recognised the limits of legislation when it comes to redirecting human lust and it refused to pander to the prejudices of members on both sides of the House. I was just about to surrender to him completely when his true intentions became clear: Sir Norman opposed the lowering of the age of consent, on the grounds that opinion polls showed the public didn't want it. Indeed, I did wonder briefly whether I might be able to bring a prosecution under the new legislation, having been so shabbily abused by an older man in a position of trust.

MPs give mass backing to gay sex at 16

PLANS TO reduce the age of consent for homosexuals to 16 came closer to reality yesterday as MPs backed the measure overwhelmingly for the second time in seven months.

The *Sexual Offences Bill* - which will include guidelines to protect youths aged 16 and 17 who are in care, boarding schools or the armed forces - after peers overturned the first Commons vote in July.

Ministers hope such statutory safeguards will persuade peers to back the moves by bowing to their concerns about young people who could have their trust abused. The peers voted down the age-of-consent measure last year when it was contained in the Crime and Disorder Bill, despite its big Commons majority.

The Government had offered a vote on the issue after the European Commission of Human Rights ruled that an unequal age of consent was a violation of privacy laws and anti-discrimination clauses of the European Convention on Human Rights. The three main party leaders and almost all the Cabinet voted for the change.

Opening the new Bill's second reading debate, which will be decided in a free vote, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, argued for the age reduction because he believed in "equality before the law".

Offering assurances to protect vulnerable teenagers, he said a new offence of abuse of trust would be introduced and codes of conduct strengthened to prevent abuse in other areas

HOMOSEXUAL RIGHTS

BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

such as the voluntary sector. The Bill was "a good measure which balances the fundamental need to ensure young people are adequately protected with the right which all our citizens should have to equality before the law".

Mr Straw said the Bill would reduce the age of consent to 16 for male homosexuals in England, Wales and Scotland and to 17 in Northern Ireland, equalising it with that for heterosexuals in each part of the UK. "This is not a question of encouraging one lifestyle as against another or of encouraging young people to have sex. Far from it, it is a question of equality before the law. It is not, in my personal view, right for the law to discriminate against the homosexual," he said.

But Desmond Swayne, Tory MP for New Forest West, said the law should restrain activity that the majority viewed as "undesirable or unnatural", adding: "People do have the choice to maintain self-discipline."

Replying, Mr Straw made clear there was no evidence that when homosexual acts were illegal at any age, this cut the number of people engaging in them. It led to "huge human unhappiness and very great injustice".

An abuse of trust could occur "where someone in a position of authority uses their influence or power, either deliberately or unintentionally, to

enter into an ostensibly consensual sexual relationship with someone over whom they are in a position of authority".

The shadow home secretary, Sir Norman Fowler, told MPs that "voting polls proved the public was as a whole opposed to a lowering of the age of consent when it came 'nearer and nearer to what they regard as childhood'".

However strongly MPs felt on the issue, they "would do well to take note" of public opinion, he said, adding: "I do not believe that there is any evidence to suggest that public opinion is unreasonable on this issue of the age of consent."

"I don't believe their vote indicates an inherent prejudice against the gay community; rather, it is the case that many of the public who are polled are parents themselves and are concerned about the possible impact that a change in the law could have on 16 and 17-year-olds in this country."

The public felt there was a responsibility on adults to "do everything in our power" to avert the risk of children being abused.

"What I am arguing is that the position should not be made worse and the risk should not be made greater," he said.

Joe Ashton, Labour MP for Bassetlaw, whose amendment last year inspired the Government to redraft its plans, welcomed the Bill.

He said Mr Straw had done a "magnificent job in listening to the backbenchers in the House and the mood of the House, which was perhaps misunderstood last June".



Jack Cunningham, Minister for the Cabinet Office, at Rhyl Primary School, where he commended pupils' recycling efforts. Mark Childers

Computer robs pensioners of cash

A MASSIVE failure by a new government computer system has left more than 160,000 pensioners out of pocket by up to £100 a week, a Whitehall spending watchdog has found.

The National Audit Office confirmed that hundreds of thousands of pensioners, widows and jobseekers' allowance claimants have been underpaid because of defects in the national insurance records system.

A scathing report presented to the Commons Public Accounts Committee yesterday said private pension providers had been paid nearly £40m compensation to cover the blunders.

SOCIAL SECURITY

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

The brand new computer system, devised for the Contributions Agency by Andersen Consulting, was supposed to log every single national insurance contribution and calculate benefits owed to employees. It went online last July, but crashed within days, leaving more than 17 million contributions unprocessed and forcing civil servants to guess the level of pensions and other benefits owed to the public.

The report concluded there were "serious doubts" that the £170m computer would be running by the Government's new target date of 1 March.

More than 1.2 million claims for jobseeker's allowance had been cleared without the benefit of up-to-date information, and 160,000 claims for state earnings-related pensions had been underpaid by up to £100 a week. About 25,000 claims for widow's benefit are being made on an emergency basis and more than 350,000 claims for incapacity benefit have also gone ahead without full information. David Davis, chairman of the

committee, said there had been "a clear failure" to deliver a crucial service to some of the most vulnerable in society.

Alistair Darling, the Secretary of State for Social Security, wrote to all MPs last September, claiming the system would be operational "within a couple of weeks".

Iain Duncan Smith, the Tory social security spokesman, said Mr Darling's stance highlighted a lack of concern and urgency about the problem. "The complacency of the Government comes close to deceit," he said.

George Bertram, chief executive of the Contributions Agency, faced sharp criticism

from MPs when he appeared before the Public Accounts Committee yesterday. Alan Williams, Labour MP for Swansea West, told him the "shambles" suggested Andersen Consulting had used the benefits system as part of its learning curve.

Stephen Timmins, the Pensions minister, said yesterday on BBC Radio that compensation, including interest, would be paid as soon as the system was operating properly.

The Post Office will stop redirecting housing benefit cheques from next month in a new attempt to stamp out fraud, Mr Darling said yesterday.

"BRACING. INSPIRED. OPULENT. GORGEOUS. DELICIOUS. This extraordinary film constantly surprises."

David Gritten - THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

"Rousing, brilliant, a joy to see."

Ken Brooks - BIG ISSUE

"A razor-sharp sense of humour. Watch, listen and learn."

KERRANG

"In short, it rocks. A brave, beautiful film."

NME

"...savage stuff."

Barry Norman - THE RADIO TIMES

"...truly a terrific film."

"Sinks its teeth... like a Boberman with a raw steak."

WHITBY ON IN LONDON

"...intelligent, funny, moving and above all brave."

Phil Hughes - RUCIT

ANDREW DEATH

BULWORTH WARREN BEATTY
HALLE BERRY

NOW SHOWING AT SELECTED CINEMAS

Virgin delays upset minister's triumph

PETER KILFOYLE, the Public Services minister, was due yesterday to launch a new taskforce to improve quality in public services. He was also to announce that the biggest number yet of government services had won the Charter Mark award - which aims to make organisations more efficient and effective. But instead of trumpeting the achievements of public services he arrived late, embarrassed and furious.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Balkan danger

VIOLENCE in Kosovo could spark a "catastrophe", the Secretary of State for Defence, George Robertson said, adding that the problem had no "easy or glib" solutions.

Net defence

A PACKAGE OF measures will be introduced to defend Britain's computer systems, the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, disclosed.

Denning praise

THE FORMER MASTER of the Rolls, Lord Denning, was described as "one of the greatest living Englishmen" by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, as peers paid tribute to him after his 100th birthday on Saturday.

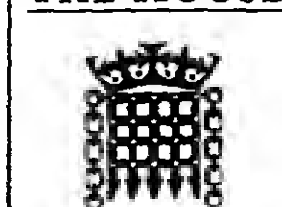
PUBLIC SERVICES

BY SARAH SCHAEFER

Mr Kilfoyle took the Virgin Railways west coast train from Liverpool to London Euston. He made clear Richard Branson's train service did not have a Charter Mark. "No, they did not apply. They knew they would stand no chance of winning it," he said.

The 508 Charter Mark winners will be announced today.

THE HOUSE



Church debate

SIMON HUGHES, a possible Liberal Democrat leadership contender, backed calls for the disestablishment of the Church of England. But Labour's Stuart Bell said: "It is interesting to know that the Liberals feel that disestablishment is in the [public] interest."

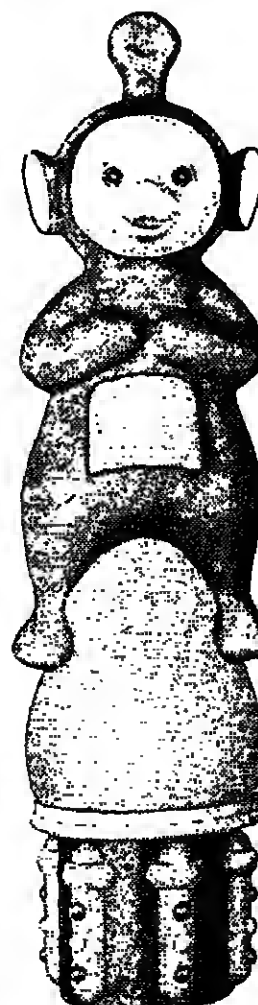
Spying demand

TAM DALYELL, the Labour MP for Linlithgow, urged ministers to respond to an exclusive investigation published in yesterday's *Independent* that MI6 officers worked under cover as part of the Uncom team looking for biological and chemical weapons in Iraq.

Product Recall Notice

Teletubbies Soft Torch (foam covered, £5.99)

Product Code: TT502



Woolworths has learned of a potential safety issue with its Teletubbies Soft Torch (product code: TT502). The soft character material is a potential choking hazard to young children.

In the interests of customer safety and as a precautionary measure, the Teletubbies Soft Torch has been withdrawn from sale in all Woolworths stores.

Any customer who has purchased this product from Woolworths since October 1998 should return it to their nearest store where a full refund will be given. A receipt is not necessary.

No other Teletubbies products are affected.

WOOLWORTHS

Th

MILLIONS of children developing world that is so polluted that it is smothering them a day, an in study has found.

The expected Third World megacities of 10 million, combined with industrial development, reliance on dirty fuels, creating the conditions for a huge increase in respiratory disease.

The a critic all ou head

PERCEPT

PEOPLE ENJOY what because they appear to be part of the searches for a simple world.

Neurologists to explain why people are attracted to a sculpture are a sculpture have discovered artists unwittingly tendency of the brain abstract side of the

A primitive region of the brain, called the limbic system, tries to capture the essence of an object, making extraneous details and amplifying features to make a form. Scientists told the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Vijay Kumar Ramani of the University of San Diego said the abstract art, artists consciously discovered of the rules of the brain discover form.

"They are heightening that abstract pictures."

The 18th-century French painter Claude Lorraine made a woman's skin making flesh far pinker than nature.

Scriptors in 3D India amplified the form by exaggerating and hips while making the waist unnaturally thin. "The point of art is to capture the very essence just to capture it but to distort it, to make it your little system more."

"That's what art is doing, distorting the pathways more often than you could with a real said the professor."

"What you are doing a woman's form, the form of a male and amplifying reference, and of course up with women breasts and big hips."

Cold

THE BIG Bang, which the start of creation, massive explosive force more like a cold fizz, to a new theory.

Andrei Linde, of world's leading cosmologists said his latest ideas universe began about years ago do not a great ball of fire but a flatting bubbles of space generating an infinite

Caine



Michael Caine: J his career was sl

American Association: Respiratory diseases are biggest child killer, plus new light on why we laugh and appreciate art

Third World air like smoking 40 a day

MILLIONS OF children in the developing world breathe air that is so polluted it is equivalent to smoking up to 40 cigarettes a day, an international study has found.

The expected growth of Third World mega-cities with populations of 10 million or more, combined with rapid industrial development and the reliance on dirty fossil fuels is creating the conditions for a huge increase in cancer and respiratory diseases.

Devra Lee Davis, of the World Resources Institute in Washington DC, said the study came to worrying conclusions about the risks facing millions of young people, who are more vulnerable to the effects of air pollution than adults.

"Most children who live in large cities in the developing world breathe air that is the equivalent of smoking two packs of cigarettes a day," she told the American Association meeting.

"Never before in history have so many children lived so closely together in so many cities where they also lack basic services, healthcare and sound nutrition.

"The rate of growth of cities in the developing world is also without precedent. Many of these cities have grown in two decades by as much as the developed world grew in a half century," she said.

Children are more vulnerable to the effects of air pollution

than adults, the study found. "Children are smaller; they breathe more relative to adults and they breathe faster and they have lungs that continue to develop," Dr Davis said.

More children are dying of respiratory diseases in the world than from any other disorder. Scientists say air pollution in the largest cities of the developing world is often between two and eight times the maximum levels

recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO). "The exposure of children to such polluted air in developing countries has sky-rocketed and is a relatively new public health issue, caused by a massive and unprecedented shift of population from rural to urban areas in the past few decades," Dr Davis said.

The study, funded by the World Health Organisation, the

US Environmental Protection Agency and other groups, looked at three measurements of air pollution - total suspended particulates (TSPs), sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide.

WHO guidelines say the maximum permissible amount of TSPs is 90 micrograms per cubic litre of air. The problem is that these cities have rapidly growing economies but old-fashioned technology.

"While development is wel-

come, the fact that it occurs in areas with technology that is 30 or 40 years old places all the populations of these cities at risk," she said.

The report says developing countries should be helped to clean up their cars, factories and other polluters before it is too late. Developed countries, although many are still polluted, have benefited from cleaner technology.

"If these pollution-reduction technologies are made more

readily available to developing countries, these could help them avoid the high risks to public health that result from current patterns of growth in their industrial and urban sectors," the report says.

Pollution has been shown to damage the cilia in the airways - the tiny hairs that sweep out pollutants and invaders. Without the cilia, harmful chemicals can get deep into lung tissue and cause permanent damage. Dr Davis said.

The art critic in all our heads

PERCEPTION

PEOPLE ENJOY works of art because they appeal to a primitive part of the brain that searches for a simpler view of the world.

Neurologists trying to explain why paintings and sculpture are a source of pleasure have discovered that artists unwittingly exploit a tendency of the brain to see the abstract side of the world.

A primitive region of the brain, called the limbic system, tries to capture the basic essence of an object by eliminating extraneous information and amplifying features that make a form unique, scientists told the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Vilayanur Ramachandran, of the University of California, San Diego, said that in some abstract art, artists are subconsciously discovering some of the rules the brain uses to discover form.

"They are artificially heightening that activity into pictures."

The 18th-century painter Francois Boucher exaggerated a woman's skin tones by making flesh far pinker than it is naturally.

Sculptors in 9th-century India amplified the female form by exaggerating breasts and hips while making the waist unnaturally narrow. "The point of art is not to copy a woman or a landscape but to capture the very essence: not just to capture it but to amplify it and distort it, thereby hitting your limbic system with more."

"That's what artists are doing, heightening the visual pathways more optimally than you could with a real object," said the professor.

"What you are doing is taking a woman's form, subtracting the form of an average male and amplifying the difference, and of course you end up with women with big breasts and big hips. But the



Scientists say the 18th-century painter Francois Boucher exaggerated a woman's skin tones, such as in 'The Odalisque' (main); Leonardo's 'Virgin and Child' (left) and portrait of Isabella d'Este appeal to a 'primitive' side of the brain

limbic system likes that."

The phenomenon is well known to behavioural scientists, who find that when rats are taught to associate a rectangle with food, they find longer and narrower rectangles more exciting, Professor Ramachandran said.

"It may not be a coinci-

dence that the ability of the artists to abstract the essential features of an image and discard redundant information is essentially identical to what the visual areas themselves have evolved to do. You can learn about the brain by studying art."

Patrick Cavanagh, a brain

researcher at Harvard, said the fondness of artists for line drawings is based on nerve cells that are built to register dark against light, which results in the identification of a line. "Line drawings are a large part of art history and current art production but there are no lines around

objects in the world. There is nothing at all in our experience that would let us learn about how lines should be used in line drawings.

"If you go into the physiology you do find cells that seem to do that. We know that artists discovered this long ago."

Woman who couldn't help laughing

SENSATION

A WOMAN who could not stop laughing each time doctors stuck a needle in her skin has helped scientists to explain why we laugh - it is nature's way of signalling that a potential threat is no big deal.

Evolutionary biologists have long puzzled over why humans laugh but Vilayanur Ramachandran, professor of neuroscience at the University of California, San Diego, believes it is a way for people to alert others that a fearful situation is a false alarm.

To explain his theory, Professor Ramachandran told the American Association for the Advancement of Science of a patient, a woman in her fifties, who suffered an unusual form of a condition called pain asymbolia, in which people report that they feel pain but it does not hurt them.

The woman also could not help laughing each time she experienced a painful stimulus. "She would laugh uncontrollably each time I would stick a needle into her and when I asked why she said 'I don't know'," Professor Ramachandran said.

Brain scans revealed a stroke had damaged the part of the brain that received signals from the skin, which meant the pain stimulus was not passed on to the part of the brain that registers hurtful experiences.

Professor Ramachandran said this meant the woman's brain was aware something potentially painful was happening to her but that this was apparently no big deal as it did not hurt. He believes this fol-

lows the recipe for a good joke, which is why she ended up laughing.

"If you look at all jokes and humour you notice they follow a certain pattern, which is especially obvious in slapstick. You take the listener along a garden path of expectation by building up the story. At the very end you introduce a twist or anomaly which entails a complete reinterpretation of everything that has been said before. You call it the punch line," he said.

A man slipping on a banana who cuts his head badly is not amusing, but if he gets up without any harm done, it is funny. "In the second case the brain is fooled but there is no big deal. It is a false alarm."

"The question is: why should you laugh and produce this hysterical sound?"

The reason I think is that you are alerting other members of your kin saying, 'Look there has been a false alarm here don't waste your resources rushing to help'. Laughter is nature's OK signal, just as a baby's cry is an alarm signal."

The theory is the only way of explaining the patient's unusual response and might be why laughter is so universal. Professor Ramachandran said. "One part of her brain is saying, 'Look there is pain' while at the same time the other part is saying, 'That's no big deal'."

So the two key ingredients - potential alarm and no big deal - are fulfilled in her and so she starts laughing uncontrollably," he said.

Cold fizz dampens Big Bang theory

ORIGINS

THE BIG Bang, which marked the start of creation, was not a massive explosive fireball but more like a cold fizz, according to a new theory.

Andrei Linde, one of the world's leading cosmologists, said his latest ideas of how the universe began about 15 billion years ago do not envisage a great ball of fire but many inflating bubbles of space-time generating an infinite number of

fresh bubbles, which expanded rapidly like the fizz in a drink.

"The theory is very simple, but we have had a lot of psychological barriers to overcome," Dr Linde, a physics professor at Stanford University in California, told the meeting.

The Big Bang fireball explains several observations in

astronomy, such as why the universe is expanding and why there is a faint trace of radiation in every corner of the sky, but it is wrong, Dr Linde said. His model relies on cosmological inflation, which suggests the universe is like a giant expanding balloon whose surface becomes less curved and flatter. The concept is better at explaining other astronomical observations, he said.

"It seems that inflation is doing very well, so far. In the last 20 years no other theory has been proposed that can explain the present state of the universe as well," he said.

"What evidence is there that the universe was originally hot? None at all."

Dr Linde's idea will have to contend with the recent discovery that not only is the universe expanding, but that the

expansion is accelerating - a fact implied by Einstein's theory of relativity. Equally, physicists and astronomers are wedded to the idea of the Big Bang, which in the Sixties replaced the "Steady State" theory, a suggestion that the universe was essentially eternal.

The Big Bang revolution followed the discovery by scientists testing new microwave listening devices of heat residue.

Caine leads British charge at Golden Globes



Michael Caine: Joked that his career was slipping

BRITISH HOPES for the Oscars have been boosted by Golden Globes for Michael Caine and Lynn Redgrave and two awards for the British film *Shakespeare in Love*.

The Golden Globes traditionally give a pointer to the Oscars, which are held in March. In the past 16 years, 12 films that won the "best film" honour at the Golden Globes have gone on to take the same prize at the Oscars.

Michael Caine was named best actor in a musical or comedy film for his role as a sleazy theatrical agent in *Little Voice*.

Picking up the award at the ceremony in Beverly Hills, California on Sunday night, the actor said: "Oh, what a shock."

My career must be slipping. This is the first time I've been available to pick up an award."

Lynn Redgrave won the film supporting actress award for her role in *Gods and Monsters*. Ms Redgrave, who played the crusty but loving maid to an ageing horror director, said: "It's been 32 years since I stood one of these on a mantelpiece and it's been crying out for a friend ever since."

Other British successes included the best comedy or musical film award to *Shakespeare in Love*, produced by David Parfitt and directed by John Madden, while Sir Tom

Stoppard and his American colleague Marc Norman, who wrote the script, won the best screenplay award.

But the actress Imelda Staunton, who also stars in the film, said success at the Globes should not be taken for granted. "The Oscars don't have a best comedy and best drama category - just best film."

Gwyneth Paltrow, who stars in *Shakespeare in Love*, won the Golden Globe for best actress in a comedy film, beating Jane Horrocks, who had been nominated for her leading role in *Little Voice*. Another British loser was Emily Watson who played the cellist Jacqueline du Pré in *Hilary and Jackie*. She lost the best actress

in a drama film award to the Australian Cate Blanchett for her title role in *Elizabeth*. Best dramatic actor was Jim Carrey for *The Truman Show*.

Saving Private Ryan was named best dramatic film, with Steven Spielberg best director for the graphic war story.

Jack Nicholson, who in the past has been nominated for 14 Globes and won five, received the Cecil B de Mille Award for his "outstanding contribution to the entertainment field."

The Golden Globes, which are split between drama and comedy or musicals, are voted for by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

Thank you ... everyone! Review, Front

5.75% GROSS/ AER*

The Savings Account

where you can always bank on high interest.

COMPETITIVE RATES GUARANTEED

Keeping up with competitive savings rates has always meant shifting your money from one account to another. Until now.

Our Instant Access Savings Account saves you the trouble by guaranteeing to match all changes in Base Rate** until February 2002, on all balances above £5,000. Our current rate is a highly competitive 5.75% Gross/AER on balances above £5,000 and 3.75% Gross/AER on balances below.

What's more, you can easily transfer funds from your account using our telephone banking service, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Or, you can take out money any time you want from over 21,000 cash machines* in the UK with a Keycard.

To find out more about the savings account that is guaranteed to please, call free on 0500 804 804.

BANK OF SCOTLAND - BANKING DIRECT™

call us free on **0500 804 804**

*The guarantee that the Annual Equivalent Rate will remain at 5.75% is based on the Bank of Scotland's current rate. The guarantee will not apply to balances held in other currencies. **The Base Rate is the rate set by the Bank of England. *The guarantee that the Annual Equivalent Rate will remain at 3.75% is based on the Bank of Scotland's current rate. The guarantee will not apply to balances held in other currencies. *The guarantee that the Annual Equivalent Rate will remain at 5.75% is based on the Bank of Scotland's current rate. The guarantee will not apply to balances held in other currencies. *The guarantee that the Annual Equivalent Rate will remain at 3.75% is based on the Bank of Scotland's current rate. The guarantee will not apply to balances held in other currencies.



Jordan's King Hussein with his son Prince Abdullah, who is to replace the monarch's brother as heir

Hussein appoints eldest son as heir

KING HUSSEIN of Jordan has dismissed his brother as heir-apparent to the Hashemite throne, installing his eldest son, the 36-year-old half-English Prince Abdullah bin Hussein, as crown prince.

The move drew a mixed reaction from Jordanians, confused by the speed of the decision days after King Hussein returned from six months of cancer treatment in the US.

"I'm shocked. I can't believe that he has got rid of Crown Prince Hassan so brutally," one royal watcher said. "The prince has been waiting in the wings for the last 35 years."

Prince Hassan's reaction is unknown, but palace sources are discounting reports from Egypt that he has moved his personal fortune abroad in preparation for an early departure.

The royal palace failed to make an official announcement

BY RICHARD DOWNES
in Amman

of the changes. Insiders say King Hussein sent two envoys to Crown Prince Hassan last Friday to tell him he was no longer in line for the throne.

After a family meeting on Sunday, the King confirmed Prince Abdullah's return to a position he held once before, from 1963 to 1965, as an infant.

King Hussein appointed his brother to the post in 1965 because of a series of assassination attempts and amid concerns that a long regency would destabilise the country.

The poor performance of Crown Prince Hassan during the King's long absence was the real reason behind his sacking. "The King felt he was too interfering. He tried to influence what the government was doing too much," said one courtier.

King Hussein returned from the Mayo Clinic, Minnesota, to a tumultuous reception in Jordan last week, promising "sweeping reforms".

While Jordanians have a form of democracy, including elections, government by cabinet and ministers, real power remains with the royal family. Suggestions that American and British officials have tried to influence the King to move in a more democratic direction have been dismissed by the palace as "nonsense".

Speculation that 18-year-old Prince Hamzah, the eldest son of King Hussein's marriage to American-born Queen Noor, would be made crown prince was wide of the mark, although the monarch has made it clear that Prince Hamzah should take over the throne in the event of Prince Abdullah falling ill or abdicating.

Prince Abdullah is considered an energetic soldier and attained the rank of major-general in the army last year. He is also known to be interested in economics and development issues and is married to Rania al-Yassin, a Jordanian of Palestinian origin.

In a country where by some estimates more than 65 per cent of the population is Palestinian, the marriage was considered a shrewd gesture.

Jordanians refused to answer questions on the streets yesterday about whether they were happy with the new crown prince's half-British ancestry. "The King has chosen him and I think that is enough," said one man waiting at the taxi rank.

His mother, English-born Toni Gardiner, known in Jordan as Princess Mona, has continued to live in the country since her 1972 divorce from the King.

Mossad told: 'Don't trust Netanyahu'

ISRAEL'S SACKED defence minister, Yitzhak Mordechai, delivered his most stinging criticism yet of Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday, warning the country's intelligence service, Mossad, not to trust the Prime Minister.

"Keep an eye on them, so they won't come up with any tricks," Mr Mordechai said on his last day in the job. He was unceremoniously fired by Mr Netanyahu two days ago. He angered the Prime Minister by proposing to head a new centrist party in the elections on 17 May.

His unprecedented attack, which was the first time an outgoing defence minister has warned the intelligence community against the folly of a prime minister, follows two days of verbal sparring by the former political allies that began with Mr Mordechai's dismissal.

It came hours before the former military man, a relative moderate in Mr Netanyahu's government, announced his candidacy for prime minister on a new centrist ticket.

Two other defectors from Mr Netanyahu's Likud party, the former finance minister Dan Meridor and the ex-mayor of Tel Aviv Roni Milo, as well as the former army chief of staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, have joined him to form a new party.

On Monday, Mr Netanyahu won re-election as head of Likud. But Mr Mordechai's bid for the Israeli leadership is a serious blow to Mr Netanyahu's chances for re-election on 17 May.

Of all the politicians who have split from Likud, Mr Mordechai is considered the most formidable challenger to Mr Netanyahu, whose coalition disintegrated last month, forcing him to call for new elections for both parliament and for prime minister.

Mr Mordechai, whose family hails from Iraqi Kurdistan, appeals to many Likud voters, who tend to emphasise the issue of security. Many are Jews of Middle Eastern origin.

An opinion poll published in

BY DEBORAH HORAN
in Jerusalem

the daily newspaper *Yedioth Aharonot* found that 32 per cent of those who voted for Mr Netanyahu in the 1996 elections would consider voting for the new party headed by Mr Mordechai.

Some analysts said the new party may represent the beginnings of a political earthquake in Israel, where politics have been dominated by the two biggest parties, Likud and Labour, since the 1970s.

Such a shake-up was made possible in part by the latest peace deal signed between a Likud-led Israeli government and the Palestinians. By signing on to a peace process it despised, Likud narrowed the gap between its ideology and that of the Labour party, opening the way for a centrist party to emerge.

Such a centrist party is likely to be more conciliatory in peace talks with Palestinians than the Netanyahu government. Mr Mordechai is considered a moderate in the peacemaking process and Lipkin-Shahak headed the negotiations that led to the second Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement, known as Oslo II.

Mr Netanyahu has already tried to brand the centrist party as "leftist", a code word that to Israelis signals capitulation to Palestinian demands. On Sunday, he accused Mr Mordechai of organising "a conspiracy to topple the government" and said that was what led him to dismiss the defence minister.

Mr Mordechai has launched his own attacks in return, suggesting Mr Netanyahu had been planning a colourful operation in Lebanon as a pre-election ploy to increase his popularity.

On Sunday, Mr Mordechai used the Bible against Mr Netanyahu, quoting Psalm 120 and hinting that he didn't believe the Prime Minister was serious about pursuing peace. "Too long have I lived among those who hate peace," Mr Mordechai said.

Tokyo teachers beset by 'classroom chaos'

THE JAPANESE for teacher is *sensei* and, until recently, the word suggested far more than its English equivalent. *Sensei* is the honorific also used of physicians, professors and artists, implying wisdom, status and respect within the community.

But this week in Tokyo, Japan's teachers are meeting in an atmosphere of crisis, beset by tales of unruly and violent students, which have left them baffled and depressed.

Japanese schools always prided themselves on their discipline, but this week's conference of 16,000 *sensei* has been dominated by a new buzz phrase: "classroom chaos".

National anxiety was triggered in 1997 by series of terrible crimes perpetrated by children, the worst being the

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
in Tokyo

case of a 14-year-old boy who beheaded a 10-year-old. Now a milder contagion is reported to have spread to classrooms. The offences - fighting, fidgeting, chatting, scribbling on desks and refusing to listen - have shocked the Japanese.

The number of teachers with psychological disorders increased last year by 30 per cent and counselling services have been established for those under stress. The Ministry of Education has announced plans for 30,000 new teachers to add to the present total of 964,000, with the suggestion that they pair up to reduce disorder.

Leading article.
Review, page 3

appy
nily?
such
erest
und.
seven
cing.
ment
und.
seven
cing.
oyed
dely,
two
ther.
und.
cing.
user!"
nily?
table
ures.
und.
seven
free
ings
und.



"SEVEN SEATS?" thought Alice. "And AIR-CONDITIONING? And ANTI-LOCK BRAKES? And TWO YEARS' FREE SERVICING? And TWO YEARS' INTEREST-FREE CREDIT? All this from £18,995?" She felt dreadfully puzzled.

APART from all our favourite stories and characters, what are the essentials of a happy childhood? Security? Comfort? Doing things together—and getting on—as a family?

All the things the new Espace was designed to make easier. And now the Espace Alizé goes further. To standard safety features like driver and passenger airbags, we've added ABS. To little luxuries like a remote-control hi-fi, we've added air-conditioning all round.

And so that such benefits can be enjoyed more widely, the Alizé comes with seven seats (the rear five all adjustable, foldable and removable). Plus two years' free servicing. Plus two years' interest free credit. From £18,995 on the road.

"Curiouser and curiouser!" cried Alice (she was so much surprised, that for the moment she quite forgot how to speak good English). For more information, call 0800 52 51 50.

The Espace. Part of the perfect childhood.

The New Espace Alizé



RENAULT

RENAULT INFO: All Renault Espaces have a 12-month unlimited mileage warranty with free RAC membership plus 3-year anti-rust warranty and Renault Assistance Services. Manufacturer's recommended retail price on the road, correct at time of going to press, excludes 17.5% VAT, delivery to the dealer, number plates, statutory road tax, 12 months' free service. Government road tax, first year registration fee of £25. Other goods or services supplied by arrangement between the customer and dealer are not included. Finance offer: subject to credit approval, applies to buy new Renault Espace ordered and registered by 31st March 1998. Written guarantee: available on request. Credit facilities: provided by RPS Ltd, Fleetville House, City Road, Ipswich IP1 1AA. Typical example (correct at time of going to press): Renault Espace Alizé 2.0i (1600cc), cash price £18,995, deposit £3,995, monthly repayments £318.95, total credit price £18,995. APR 9%. Free servicing applies to new Renault Espaces ordered and registered by 31st March 1998, and is for two free servicing sessions in service intervals of 12,000 miles and 24,000 miles (10,000 and 20,000 for diesel) - equivalent to typical annual mileage. Finance and service offers apply to private and business purchase only (excluding fleet). See your Renault dealer for details.

Freetown rebels hold journalist

TWO EUROPEAN journalists were abducted yesterday by rebels in Sierra Leone who later asked one to deliver a guerrilla demand to the authorities.

Patrick Saint Paul of the French daily *Le Figaro* said he and a Spaniard, Javier Espinosa, of the newspaper *El Mundo*, were seized in a suburb of the capital, Freetown.

The rebels headed with the two into the nearby bush where they later released Mr Saint Paul. The Frenchman said the rebels ordered him to pass on their demand for negotiations with Nigerian-led West African troops pursuing the guerrillas. They said they would not release Mr Espinosa until their demand was broadcast on radio.

The journalists had left their hotel in the western part of Freetown earlier yesterday for the eastern suburbs where the

BY ALEX DUVAL SMITH
in Freetown

rebels, retreating from the advancing West African troops, are reported to be committing widespread atrocities against civilians.

A British operation to dislodge aid to injured and displaced people in Sierra Leone entered its second day yesterday. But after a new rebel advance on the capital, evidence was emerging of a command crisis among pro-government forces.

The RFA *Oak Leaf* - a supply vessel to HMS *Norfolk*, the frigate that has been off Freetown for nearly two weeks - was due to arrive last night with rice and detergent. On Sunday 15 tons of British and European Union aid was flown in.

But it became clear that accounts of an end to three weeks of fighting in and around Free-

town were premature. Sporadic violence has returned to east-central Freetown after reports that rebels are hiding among refugees from the city's razed east end.

After days of rumours about disarray within the Nigerian-dominated command of the 15,000-strong West African force defending the elected president of Sierra Leone, Nigeria's foreign minister and chief of general staff flew in for an emergency meeting in Freetown yesterday.

According to sources close to the West African force, known as Ecomog, donor nations to West Africa are urging the Nigerians to pass control of the Sierra Leonean operation to Guinea.

"The Guineans are better soldiers - trained by the French and the Soviets before them. They are more motivated because their country is potentially under threat if the Sierra Leone

conflict continues," said the source.

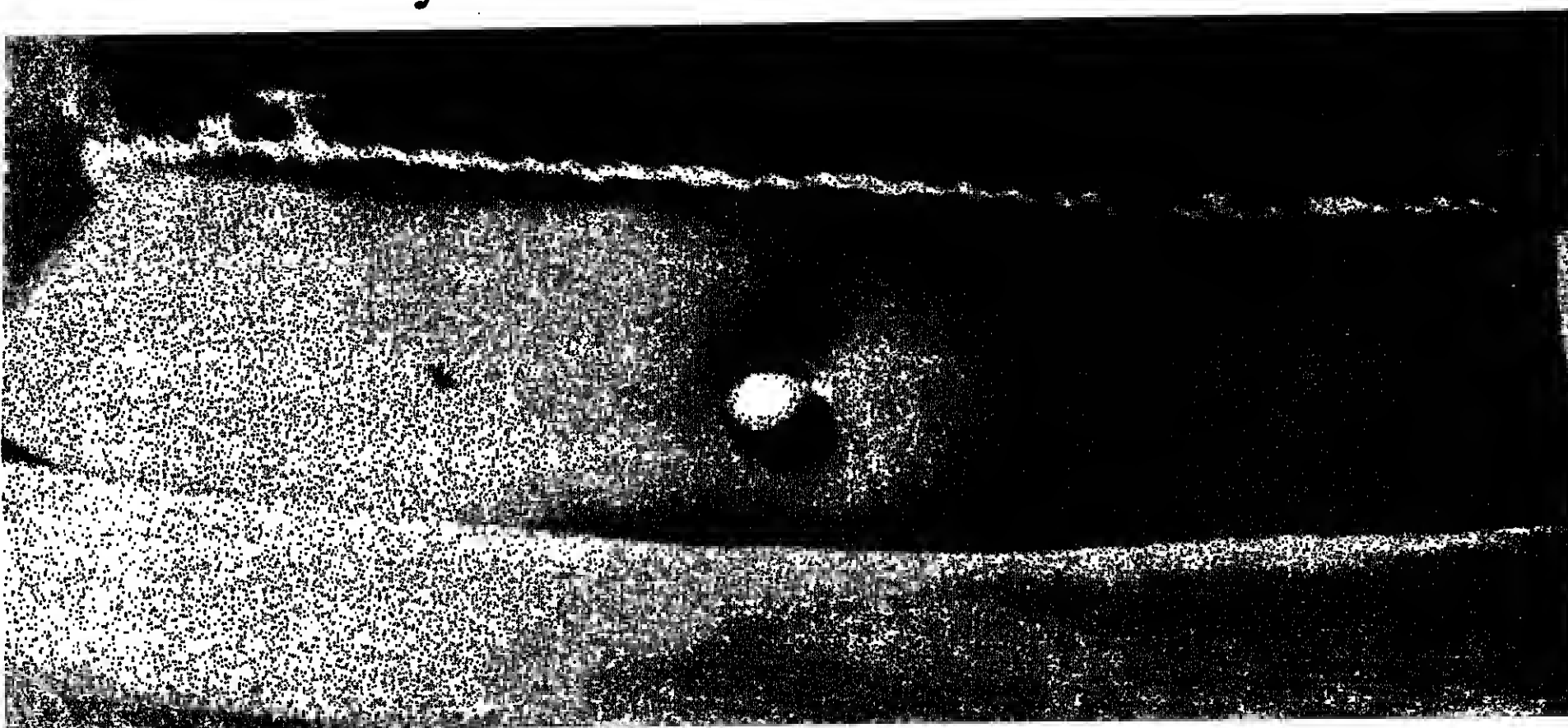
It is not clear what was discussed at the high-level meeting yesterday - between Nigeria's Foreign Minister, Ignatius Odiemeka, his Sierra Leonean counterpart, Sama Banya, as well as Nigeria's Air Marshal Daggash and the Ecomog chief, General Timothy Shelpidi. But according to a Western diplomat, it has been made clear to Nigeria that donor nations to Ecomog are disappointed with the effort to oust the Liberian-backed bush-warrior rebels threatening President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah.

The Nigerian troops - many of them battle-weary after serving in Liberia - have not been paid since 10 December. Many, who are supposed to receive \$150 a month, (£93) say openly that they do not see why they should put down their lives for Sierra Leone.

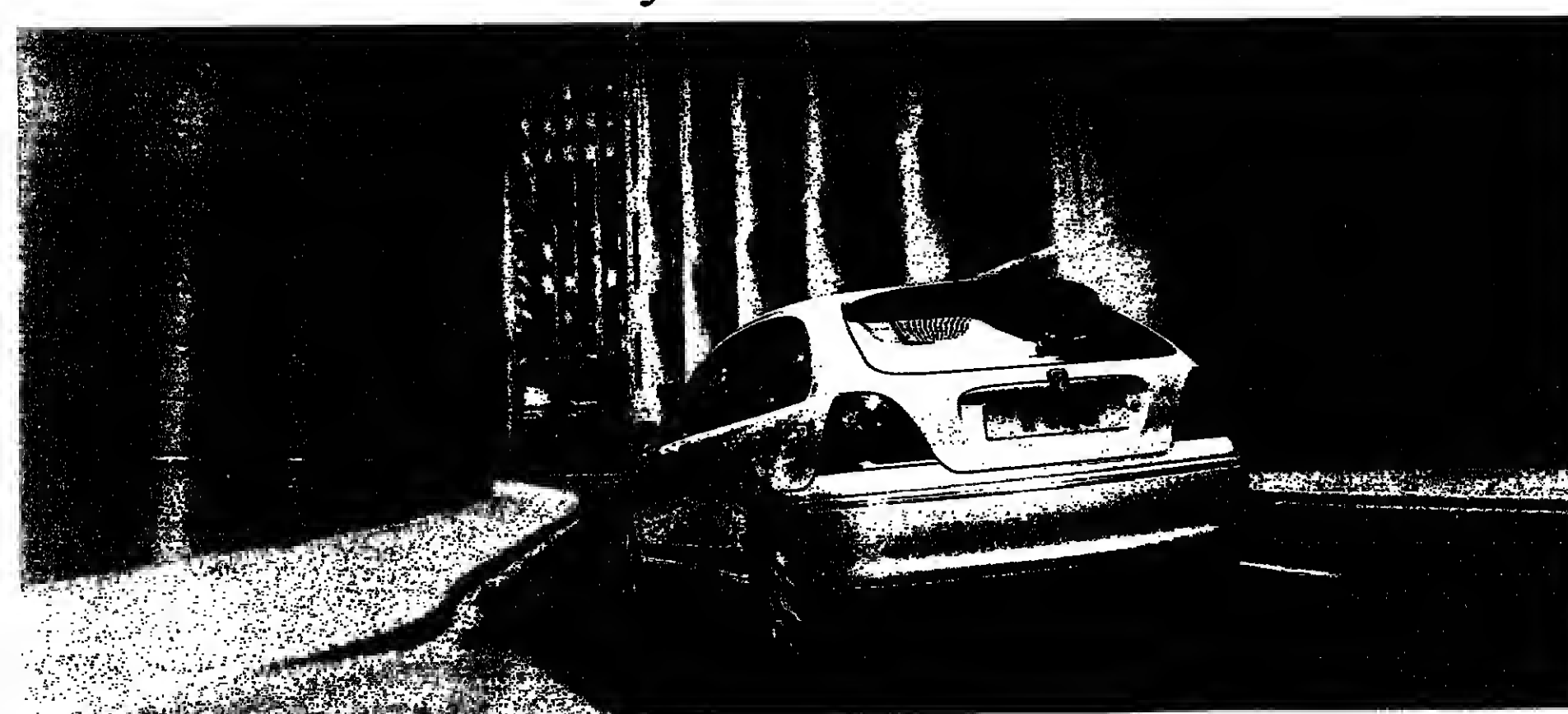


Children joining a Christian protest in Delhi yesterday against the killing on Saturday of Australian missionary Graham Staines and his sons Philip, 10, and Timothy, 8, who were burnt alive in their car by a mob

Pearly Queens in London?



A Rover 200 (with 0% finance) from just £8,995?



Take a fresh look.

It's no wonder Londoners like a sing-song. With 2 years' interest free finance 0% APR* (with a minimum deposit of 50%) and 1 year's free insurance, the Rover 200 is just the excuse they need for a good old knees up. If that hasn't got Mother Brown quaking in her boots, then perhaps the Rover 214i SE for £11,900 with power assisted steering, remote central door locking and air-conditioning will.

The offer is available until 31st January 1999. Call 0345 186 186 or just visit your local Rover dealer and take a fresh look. www.rover.co.uk



Russia saved, thanks to the pyramids

STREET LIFE
SAMOTECHNY LANE

NATASHA CAME round with a copy of *Rabotnitsa* (Working Girl), a Soviet-era magazine that is now glossy, feminine and devoted to New Age ideas. We turned first to the horoscopes, essential Russian reading. Then Natasha pointed out an article about a man who was building a circle of pyramids around Moscow.

"Aquarius - a meeting this week that could change your life. You should go and see that pyramid man," said Natasha. I thought so too, although I suspected the meeting with Alexander Golod was more likely to produce another in my occasional series, "The Great Eccentrics of Russia".

Mr Golod, whose surname incidentally means "hunger", sent a white Volga limousine for me. I was taken through a maze of Moscow back streets and an unmarked blue gate into a defence factory that produces meteorological equipment for aerodromes, ships and spacecraft. "I am the director," said Mr Golod. "But since the Defence Ministry has not paid us for months, I am working on my private pyramid project."

A small, white pyramid stood on his desk, with a map of Russia, scattered with crystals, amethysts and other semi-precious stones. He reached into a drawer and gave me a handful of similar stones. "Take those," he said, "you'll explain."

"Imagine this room is made up of cubes. There is a distorting mirror on the wall. The cubes become twisted and deformed. The space in which we live is like that now. Adam lived for 900 years but we live for only 70 because our space has become distorted. This leads to war, economic problems, earthquakes, holes in the ozone layer and other ills. But pyramids correct the distortion and restore harmony."

How he amassed the money was unclear but Mr Golod said he had spent \$2m (£1.2m) on building pyramids around Moscow and planned to erect more. He showed me a video of the biggest, towering 22 metres above the lake at Seliger, 400km north of the capital. There was another, 11 metres high, at Ramensky in the Moscow region and a complex of five-metre-high pyramids in the region of Bashkiria, to the east.

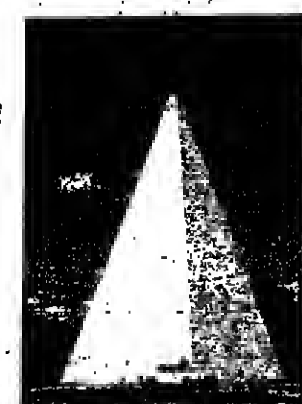
Mr Golod's pyramids are made of glass fibre rather than stone blocks. They are more elongated than the tombs of the Egyptian pharaohs or the pyramids used by Mexican Indians to observe the stars. Indeed, they serve a different purpose.

"My pyramids are protecting Moscow from flu, cancer and AIDS," said Mr Golod. "Soon these diseases will disappear. Some people speak of the apocalypse. I say we can live as long as we want. It depends on the harmony we create around us."

"I see," I said, "but where do the stones come in?"

"I buy bags of them and put them inside the pyramids. They become charged with the special energy there. Then I drive round Moscow, scattering them on the roadsides. Sometimes the snow cleaners sweep them away and I have to scatter more. The stones are resonators, spreading the energy of the pyramids."

He said he had dropped



One of Mr Golod's glass fibre Moscow pyramids

some stones around a prison near Tver, north of Moscow, and the restive inmates had calmed down. He also gave stones to the sick, to put around their beds. "I do not charge money for this service. It is an act of charity."

"Is it white magic, then?" I asked, "you know, positive psychological suggestion?" "No," said Mr Golod, a mathematician, "it's science. The stones work for you whether you know they are there or not. Of course, the effect is stronger if you know."

He claimed that since he built his pyramid at Seliger, the lake water had become purer, harvests had improved, rare wild flowers had appeared in the forests and storks had returned. He said if pyramids were built in Yugoslavia, the Kosovo crisis would go away. And, since a great shaft of energy rises up from the top of a pyramid, such a structure could also help to close the ozone hole over Australia. "I have written twice to the Australian embassy about this but they do not seem interested."

Not to be deterred, Mr Golod has taken steps to protect not only Moscow but also the entire globe. He has persuaded a comatose to carry some of his stones and they are now orbiting round Earth on the space station Mir.

The stones he gave me had been energised inside the Seliger pyramid and came from the same batch that went up to Mir. To be on the safe side, I put an amethyst in my jewellery box. I gave the rest to Natasha. She was thrilled. "Scorpio - in the new year you will find new sources of energy. There. What did I tell you?"

HELEN WOMACK

Business & City Editor:
News desk: 0177 293 26
E-mail: indybusiness@independent.co.uk

BRIEF

Ericsson to cut 1

ERICSSON, the troubled Swedish mobile phone giant, is set to cut 1,000 jobs in its mobile phone division in the next few months. The move is part of a restructuring plan to cut costs and improve profitability. The company is also looking to expand its presence in the Asian market.

Green takes over

GREEN, the British environmentalist, has taken over the leadership of the Green Party. She is expected to lead the party in the upcoming general election. Her focus is on environmental issues and social justice.

Pearson publishes

PEARSON, the media company, has published its annual sales figures. The company reported a significant increase in its advertising revenue, particularly in the UK market. The figures are expected to boost the company's share price.

STOCK

FTSE 100: 4,000.00
DAX: 2,500.00
Nikkei: 15,000.00

INTEREST

3-month: 4.50%
6-month: 4.75%
1-year: 5.00%

MONEY MARKET RATE

1-month: 4.25%
3-month: 4.50%
6-month: 4.75%

CURR

£/\$: 0.65
£/¥: 100.00
£/€: 1.65

POUND

£/\$: 0.65
£/¥: 100.00
£/€: 1.65

OTHER II

Spain: 1.50
Italy: 1.20
Japan: 1.10

TOURIS

Australia (\$): 2.5377
Belgium (francs): 19.07
Canada (\$): 56.07

Cyprus (pounds): 0.8046
Denmark (kroner): 10.39
Finland (markka): 8.2862

France (francs): 9.1065
Germany (marks): 2.7270
Greece (drachmas): 449.00

Hong Kong (\$): 12.46
Ireland (pounds): 1.0927
Israel (sheqels): 6.2441

Italy (lira): 2.0361
Japan (yen): 166.09
Malaysia (ringgits): 6.0426

Malta (lira): 0.6084
New Zealand (\$): 1.3560
Norway (kroner): 4.7564

Poland (zlotys): 4.0000
Portugal (escudos): 200.484
South Africa (rand): 6.6250

South Korea (won): 1.0000
Sweden (kronor): 4.6656
Switzerland (francs): 1.7366

Taiwan (dollars): 3.6667
Thailand (baht): 5.5000
Turkey (liras): 1.3600

USA (\$) 1.0000
UK (£) 1.0000
West Germany (marks): 2.3363

Yugoslavia (dinars): 1.0000
Zimbabwe (dolars): 1.0000

Source: Reuters
Last updated: 11.15

www.bloomberg.com/uk

Business & City Editor, Jeremy Warner
News desk: 0171-293 2636 Fax: 0171-293 2098
E-mail: IndyBusiness@Independent.co.uk

BUSINESS

Microsoft backs NTL to create UK cable force

MICROSOFT, the American software giant, yesterday made its first direct investment in the UK cable industry by injecting \$500m (£300m) into NTL in return for a 5 per cent stake in the acquisitive media group.

The move is part of a broader alliance between NTL and Microsoft that will see the two companies co-operate to develop broadband services to be delivered to residential customers at high speeds.

The step is a boost for NTL, which has issued huge amounts of debt in its quest to build a national cable network in the UK. Last year, the company spent over \$2bn taking over rival franchises. It also took out an option to buy a controlling stake in Newcastle

where they could work with someone who was developing new products," said John Gregg, NTL's managing director for corporate development and finance.

Under the terms of the deal, Microsoft and NTL will set up a technology group to guide the development of new services, including high-speed Internet access. In return, Microsoft will invest \$500m in NTL's convertible preference shares, convertible at \$100 a share. It will also receive 1.2 million warrants allowing it to buy NTL stock at \$84 a share. If all the instruments are converted into shares, Microsoft would be left with a 6.2 per cent shareholding in NTL.

On Nasdaq, NTL shares

soared \$12.19 to \$79.875 by midday on the announcement. In London, shares in CWC rose 27.5p to 780p, while Telewest gained 23.25p to 250.75p as investors speculated that further consolidation was in the pipeline.

Telewest is seen as a prime target because TCI, the US cable group, is expected to sell its stake following its takeover by AT&T. "Consolidation moves are afoot," one analyst said. "But the question is on whose terms."

Microsoft has already made similar investments in the US. Several years ago it sank \$1bn into Comcast, a US cable operator, in an attempt to encourage investment in US cable networks. "This is an endorsement

of cable as the best network into the home," said Mr Gregg.

All three UK cable operators are due to launch digital cable systems this year. Apart from offering a multitude of television channels, these will also allow customers to use their televisions to surf the Internet at high speed. Experts reckon digital cable will offer Internet access at up to 100 times the speed of a normal modem, making possible truly interactive services such as home shopping.

News of Microsoft's move is likely to infuriate NCI, the software joint venture between Oracle and Netscape - two of Microsoft's bitter rivals. Just last month NTL said it would use NCI's operating system in its digital set-top box decoders.

City seeks Mirror Group auction

By Andrew Garfield
Financial Editor

SHARES IN Mirror Group rose 9p to 207p yesterday as expectations grew that the chief executive, David Montgomery, will step down later today, paving the way for a fully fledged auction of the newspaper group.

Trinity, the regional newspaper group whose bid approach sparked the boardroom row, has signalled it is willing to raise its original 165p share indicative offer. It was last night standing by to resume talks in the event of Mr Montgomery quitting today.

Bankers say that with the boardroom row resolved, Mirror will be in a better position to negotiate with both Trinity and Regional Independent Media group, which had also tabled a bid with the backing of Candover the venture capital group, and Goldman Sachs.

There were suggestions at the weekend that Hearst Corporation, the US newspaper group, might step in with an offer, particularly if the decision was taken to split Mirror up and sell the national titles - the *Mirror*, *Scottish Daily Record* and *Sunday Mail* - separately from regional titles. It is the latter that interest Trinity.

Shareholders are also hoping that Axel Springer, the German publisher that tried to buy the *Mirror* last year, might return to the fray.

Sir Victor Blank, Mirror Group chairman, was last night believed to have persuaded the executive directors to abstain in the event of a vote for Mr Montgomery's removal being required at a crucial board meeting of the group today.

A last ditch appeal by Mr Montgomery to key Mirror Group shareholders appeared last night to have failed, with bankers insisting that they had not been swayed from their view that there was no way forward for the group with Mr Montgomery at the helm.

The executive directors, some of whom are extremely close to Mr Montgomery, had until late yesterday been expected to line up on his side, accentuating the split that has torn the group apart since the two sides fell out over the approach from Trinity two weeks ago.

Sir Victor is believed to have the full backing of the non-executives, particularly Sir Gordon Borrie, the former director-general of fair trading, and Angus Grossart, who heads Noble Grossart, the Edinburgh merger bank, although Mr Montgomery had hoped to persuade at least one, Sonia Land, to back his campaign to stay.

John Allwood, the former finance director who heads the regional newspapers arm, has already been lined up to replace Mr Montgomery.

Outlook, page 15

BRIEFING

Ericsson to cut 11,000 jobs

ERICSSON, the troubled Swedish telecoms giant, yesterday said it would axe 11,000 jobs worldwide in a bid to slash costs and restore investors' confidence. The company, which issued a profit warning last month, said that its 104,000 workforce would be reduced by more than 5,000 this year and 6,000 in 2000. Ericsson, Sweden's largest company, said the job cuts would yield cost savings of \$bn Swedish crowns (£224m) in two years' time. It added that the restructuring was part of its plans to move away from fixed telephone networks to focus on the booming mobile phones and Internet markets.

Green takes over at Sears

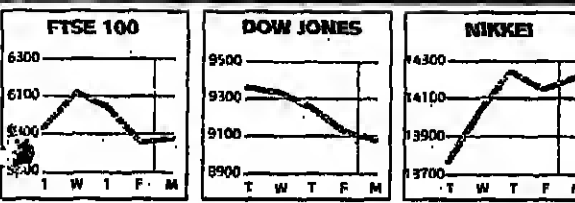
PHILIP GREEN (left) formally won control of the ailing Sears group yesterday when his January Investments vehicle said it had agreed to buy 52.9 per cent of the shares. JIL, bankrolled by the Barclay Brothers, agreed to buy the 34 million shares controlled by Phillips & Drew, Sears' largest shareholder.

Mr Green, who was still in the south of France yesterday, said he will move into Sears head office in London today to start work. He added: "I'll be there from noon. I'll meet all the management and get everyone settled." He declined to say if there would be any early decisions on how many of the old Sears board he would retain or how quickly he might sell parts of the business. "People think I'm going to sell bits and pieces within five minutes but that's not true."

Pearson publishers for sale

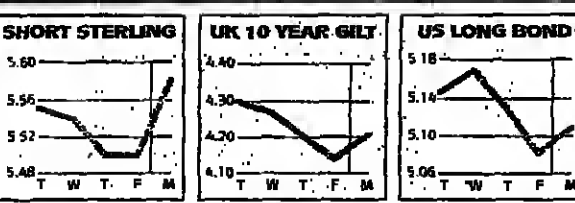
PEARSON, the media company, yesterday hung a for-sale sign over a group of reference and business publishing businesses with annual sales of \$250m (£150m). The businesses, including titles such as *Webster's New World Dictionary* and *Betty Crocker's Cookbook*, were bought last year as part of Pearson's \$4.6bn purchase of the bulk of Simon & Schuster.

STOCK MARKETS



Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Vol (%)
FTSE 100	5890.90	19.70	0.34	6195.60	4399.20	2.75
FTSE 250	4635.20	6.10	0.13	5910.90	4247.60	3.41
FTSE 350	2770.00	8.40	0.30	2969.10	2110.40	2.85
FTSE All Share	2672.99	7.63	0.29	2886.52	2143.53	2.89
FTSE SmallCap	2091.40	-1.70	-0.08	2793.80	1834.40	3.85
FTSE Floating	1177.90	0.60	0.05	1517.10	1046.20	4.61
FTSE AIM	818.80	0.50	0.06	1146.90	761.30	1.22
FTSE Eurotop 100	2725.83	14.66	0.54	3079.27	2018.15	2.16
FTSE Eurotop 300	1186.50	6.15	0.52	1332.07	880.63	1.00
Dow Jones	9290.03	-32.44	-0.35	9647.95	7400.30	1.89
Nikkei	14208.81	-54.81	-0.38	17352.55	12787.90	1.02
Hang Seng	9499.50	-239.02	-2.45	11526.16	6544.79	3.70
Dax	4982.45	-36.83	-0.73	6217.83	3833.71	1.74
S&P 500	1223.27	-2.12	-0.17	1278.05	823.32	1.29
Nasdaq	2343.31	3.91	0.17	2474.38	1357.09	0.29
Toronto 300	6593.20	1.59	0.02	7837.70	5320.90	1.64
Brazil Bovespa	7190.21	-131.11	-1.79	12339.14	4575.69	8.75
Belgium Euronext	3346.86	-18.81	-0.56	3712.21	2902.72	2.11
Australian All Ordinaries	525.35	5.63	1.08	606.65	356.58	1.81
France CAC 40	4050.80	31.47	0.78	4404.94	2881.21	1.99
Milan MIB30	33648.00	-97.00	-0.29	35170.00	24175.00	1.21
NY Mid East 35	9665.60	53.60	0.56	10989.80	6869.90	1.93
Overall	5254.46	20.87	0.40	5981.70	3732.57	1.43
S Korea Comp	339.76	-10.82	-3.17	651.85	277.37	1.10
Australia ASX	2827.90	-20.50	-0.72	2902.90	2386.70	3.25

INTEREST RATES



Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Vol (%)
FTSE 100	5890.90	19.70	0.34	6195.60	4399.20	2.75
FTSE 250	4635.20	6.10	0.13	5910.90	4247.60	3.41
FTSE 350	2770.00	8.40	0.30	2969.10	2110.40	2.85
FTSE All Share	2672.99	7.63	0.29	2886.52	2143.53	2.89
FTSE SmallCap	2091.40	-1.70	-0.08	2793.80	1834.40	3.85
FTSE Floating	1177.90	0.60	0.05	1517.10	1046.20	4.61
FTSE AIM	818.80	0.50	0.06	1146.90	761.30	1.22
FTSE Eurotop 100	2725.83	14.66	0.54	3079.27	2018.15	2.16
FTSE Eurotop 300	1186.50	6.15	0.52	1332.07	880.63	1.00
Dow Jones	9290.03	-32.44	-0.35	9647.95	7400.30	1.89
Nikkei	14208.81	-54.81	-0.38	17352.55	12787.90	1.02
Hang Seng	9499.50	-239.02	-2.45	11526.16	6544.79	3.70
Dax	4982.45	-36.83	-0.73	6217.83	3833.71	1.74
S&P 500	1223.27	-2.12	-0.17	1278.05	823.32	1.29
Nasdaq	2343.31	3.91	0.17	2474.38	1357.09	0.29
Toronto 300	6593.20	1.59	0.02	7837.70	5320.90	1.64
Brazil Bovespa	7190.21	-131.11	-1.79	12339.14	4575.69	8.75
Belgium Euronext	3346.86	-18.81	-0.56	3712.21	2902.72	2.11
Australian All Ordinaries	525.35	5.63	1.08	606.65	356.58	1.81
France CAC 40	4050.80	31.47	0.78	4404.94	2881.21	1.99
Milan MIB30	33648.00	-97.00	-0.29	35170.00	24175.00	1.21
NY Mid East 35	9665.60	53.60	0.56	10989.80	6869.90	1.93
Overall	5254.46	20.87	0.40	5981.70	3732.57	1.43
S Korea Comp	339.76	-10.82	-3.17	651.85	277.37	1.10
Australia ASX	2827.90	-20.50	-0.72	2902.90	2386.70	3.25

CURRENCIES						
S/E		C/E		W/E		
1.660		1.435		190		
1.655		1.430		188		
1.650		1.425		186		
1.645		1.420		184		
T W T F M		T W T F M		T W T F M		

Footsie swings as bid fever runs rampant

OLD FASHIONED takeover fever gripped the stock market. A steady flow of deals - and rumours of more to come - provided much of the action as Footsie, in a volatile session, swung more than 150 points.

Four groups admitted for the first time that they were involved in corporate action, several others were caught in bid speculation, and there were rumblings in some established takeover situations.

Electra, the investment trust, confirmed it had been approached by 3i group and its shares spiralled 119p to 682.5p; 3i firmed 14p to 631p. Advest Automotive revealed it was involved in talks that could lead to a 150p share offer and jumped 60.5p to 134p.

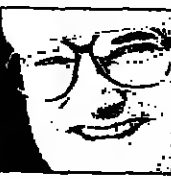
Condom maker LIG received an "unsolicited" approach, jumping 35p to 163.5p, and Gremlin, a computer games group, surged 26p to 100p after spotting possible predators.

HARD PRESSED Waverley Mining, where Ofex-traded Corporate Resolve is bidding for a stake, was the subject of three big trades, strengthening suspicions that a bid for full control is on the way.

Bank nominee companies were active: one picked up 4.11 per cent and another 6.93 per cent to take its interest to 11.53 per cent. And obscure Patersons of Greenockhill acquired 13.03 per cent. Waverley shares held at 6.5p.

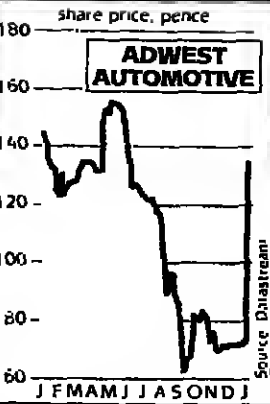
And then, after the market closed, it became apparent that the rumoured Federal Mogul strike at LucasVarity, the car components group, could be near. Lucas had contented itself with repeating an earlier statement that strategic discussions with various groups continued. Then Federal, the US group which took over TSN, said it was considering a 200p share offer.

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



but Lucas refused to talk. Strong through the session, Lucas ended 29.5p up at 244p.

Mirror, the newspaper publisher where a boardroom split has appeared as one offer remains on the table and others boomer, rose 9p to 207p. Trinity, a rejected suitor, hardened 22p to 449.5p.

Portsmouth & Sunderland Newspapers jumped 150p to 1,650p after admitting it had received approaches following the smash-and-grab bid from Johnston Press.

GRE, the insurer, added 9.25p to 378.5p as the market awaited the Royal & Sun Alliance terms. Royal, seemingly on hopes that its not particularly popular offer will be topped, rose 19.25p to 484.5p.

Field, a packaging group, improved 21p to 337.5p as a second US offer was signalled. The company has agreed a 320p share bid from Chesa-

peak; now Shorewood Packaging may counter.

House of Fraser jumped 8p to 92p with rumours persisting of a bid. Shami Ahmed, creator of the Joe Blatts jeans empire, is circling with Chelsfield property group, which firmed 12.5p to 276p.

Securicor, as the rumour was revived it was in talks with BT over its Cellnet stake, gained 17.75p to 579.25p.

Other stories included a GEC bid for Philips' and Siemens' medical electronic operations, and a BG assault on Monument Oil & Gas, up 2.25p to 36p. The speculation also engulfed Telspec, an electronics group that advanced 11.5p to 69.5p, and Vaux, the hotelier on the verge of selling its breweries, 11p at 244.5p.

Servisair, the aircraft support group, was little changed at 216p after Framlington, one of its main shareholders, lifted its stake to 9.76 per cent, buying shares above the 200p level of the Amey offer.

Sears was little changed at 356.5p as Philip Green's vehicle moved to 52.9 per cent of the shares but, underlining that not all bid stories end happily, the Lady in Leisure fitness group fell 27.5p to 95p against a 246.5p peak.

Footsie ended 19.7 points higher at 5,880.9. Supporting indices were mixed, with bid action helping the mid cap to a 6.1-point gain to 4,835.2 but the small cap relapsed a further 1.7 points to 2,091.4.

Cable & Wireless Communications gained 27.5p to 780p as Morgan Stanley lifted its target price to 850p, but its Cable & Wireless parent softened 7.5p to 849p although Henderson Crosswhite calculated that even without Hong Kong Telecom the shares were worth 820p.

well as Hong Kong's banks and lost 43p to 1,806p.

Thistle Hotels fell 6p to 106.5p. Worries about its involvement in London hotels seemed to do the damage.

Jarvis, the construction and rail maintenance group, gained 23.5p to 570p. It met analysts on Friday and is due to see fund managers. Kwik Fit, the tyres and exhausts chain, rose 26.5p to 417.5p with Warburg Dillon Read suggesting 500p.

Rage Software improved a further 2.5p (after 4p) to 14.75p with Seag putting turnover at 28.6 million shares. The company is negotiating with Microsoft about distributing its latest football game.

Internet interest was back, with InterX, the former Ideal Hardware, launching a new Internet service and gaining 42.5p to 373.5p. Geo Interactive, with the start of an e-mail service, was up 11.5p to 51.5p. On-Line gained 30p to 127.5p. Struggling Laura Ashley,

STOCKBROKER Redmayne Bentley has put the shares of Singer & Friedlander, one of the few London merchant banks not in foreign ownership, on its buy list.

The shares have underperformed both Schroders and Close Brothers, two other UK-owned investment banks, and its main rivals. Redmayne is shooting for profits of £58.6m for last year and £63m for this year. The shares are 101p against 185p last year.

up 2.75p to 14.75p in brisk trading, was said to be the target of some recovery funds and Monsoon, the fashion chain, was in tatters as it produced its first profits for 13 years. The shares, floated at 198p less than a year ago, fell 7p to 46.5p, a low.

SEAQ VOLUME: 937.2m
SEAQ TRADES: 68,123
GILTS INDEX: 116.77 -0.40

COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	Dividend	Pay day	X-div
Worle (I)	82.70m (41.77m)	5.75m (5.00m)	7.50p (8.00p)	0.90p (0.85p)	06.04.99
Veritas Publishing Group (I)	13.22m (13.04m)	2.35m (2.32m)	8.5p (8.0p)	30.04.99	01.03.99
Veritas Group (I)	13.22m (13.04m)	2.35m (2.32m)	8.5p (8.0p)	30.04.99	01.03.99
Veritas (I)	13.22m (13.04m)	2.35m (2.32m)	8.5p (8.0p)	30.04.99	01.03.99
Veritas (I)	13.22m (13.04m)	2.35m (2.32m)	8.5p (8.0p)	30.04.99	01.03.99

Contract	Settlement	High	Low	Est floor volume	Open Interest
Long Gilt	Mar-99	120.04	120.85	119.90	31188.00
1 yr Gilt	Mar-99	109.66	...	...	...
German Bund	Mar-99	117.68	...	...	...
Italian Bond	Mar-99	115.30	115.55	115.22	7446.00
Japan Govt Bd	Mar-99	130.30	130.12	130.12	857.00
3 Mth Sterling	Mar-98	94.42	94.50	94.41	26344.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Mar-99	94.72	94.85	94.71	46771.00
3 Mth Euroyen	Mar-99	96.99	97.05	97.03	13260.00
3 Mth Euroswiss	Mar-99	98.71	98.76	98.70	8485.00
3 Mth Eurolibor	Mar-99	98.80	98.85	98.89	6085.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Mar-99	97.03	97.05	97.03	12690.00
3 Mth Euroyen	Mar-99	97.10	97.10	97.10	...
3 Mth Euroswiss	Mar-99	97.10	97.10	97.10	...
3 Mth Eurolibor	Mar-99	97.10	97.10	97.10	...

Series	Call	Put	Call	Put	Call	Put
5800	162.34	252.31	255.358	344.434	420.498	...
5850	141.33	281.31	233.386	319.461	381.519	...
5900	121.33	310.30	201.493	301.483	367.547	...
5950	101.32	340.29	189.443	282.524	347.575	...

Crude Oil (Brent)	WTI Crude (Brent)	WTI Crude (Brent)	WTI Crude (Brent)	WTI Crude (Brent)	WTI Crude (Brent)
1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100
1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100
1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100

Index	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100
1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100
1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100
1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100	1997-100

Country	Sterling	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Spot	1 month	3 months	Euro
UK	1.0000	...	...	0.6034	0.6039	0.6046	0.6083	...
Australia	1.6245	2.6227	2.6197	1.5837	1.5839	1.5839	1.8326	...
Austria	19.710	19.691	19.662	11.893	11.891	11.888	13.7803	...
Belgium	37.782	37.645	37.601	34.816	34.816	34.816	40.400	...
Canada	2.9095	2.9078	2.9068	1.5143	1.5145	1.5145	1.7523	...
Denmark	10.5556	10.537	10.503	6.4300	6.4235	6.4108	7.4408	...
France	1.4321	1.4288	1.4277	1.1572	1.1589	1.1626	1.0000	...
Germany	8.5165	8.4969	8.4604	5.1389	5.1313	5.1153	5.9457	...
Greece	3.9396	3.9374	3.9324	5.6610	5.6610	5.6610	6.5986	...
Italy	460.75	462.75	466.61	2.7802	2.7802	2.7802	2.7802	...
Japan	12.962	12.955	12.955	7.7490	7.7490	7.7490	8.5671	...
Malaysia	1.781	1.781	1.781	0.8807	0.8807	0.8807	0.8807	...
Mexico	2.7735	2.7735	2.7735	1.6772	1.6772	1.6772	1.6772	...
Netherlands	1.362	1.362	1.362	1.1370	1.1370	1.1370	1.1370	...
New Zealand	1.6275	1.6275	1.6275	3.8000	3.8000	3.8000	3.8000	...
Norway	3.1493	3.1493	3.1493	1.9018	1.9018	1.9018	2.2037	...
Portugal	1.3168	1.3168	1.3168	1.7373	1.7373	1.7373	1.7373	...
Spain	1.6344	1.6344	1.6344	7.4702	7.4702	7.4702	8.6194	...
Sweden	2.8716	2.8716	2.8716	1.7328	1.7328	1.7328	2.0048	...
Switzerland	2.073	2.073	2.073	3.7511	3.7511	3.7511	4.3524	...
Taiwan	1.5134	1.5134	1.5134	1.6839	1.6839	1.6839	1.6839	...
Thailand	10.1006	10.1006	10.1006	6.0403	6.0403	6.0403	6.0403	...
US	2.2878	2.2878	2.2878	1.7105	1.7105	1.7105	1.7105	...
UK	1.6372	1.6372	1.6372	1.3812	1.3812	1.3812	1.3812	...
US	1.6372	1.6372	1.6372	1.3812	1.3812	1.3812	1.3812	...

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1.6372	1.0000	Oman	0.6380	0.6380
Brazil	2.9499	1.7800	Pakistan	0.4387	0.4387
China	13.719	8.2784	Philippines	64.218	38.750
Czech Rep	51.967	31.358	Poland	3.5956	3.5956
Egypt	5.6250	3.6016	Saudi	6.6316	6.6316
Ghana	391.1	236.00	Russia	384.482	236.000
Hong Kong	358.68	216.43	South Korea	196.22	118.400
India	70.433	42.500	Taiwan	63.695	63.695
Indonesia	15.840	9.3130	Thailand	61.235	36.950
Kenya	0.5019	0.3029	UK	54.423	32.840
Nigeria	141.69	85.500	UAE	6.0862	3.6725

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1.6372	1.0000	Oman	0.6380	0.6380
Brazil	2.9499	1.7800	Pakistan	0.4387	0.4387
China	13.719	8.2784	Philippines	64.218	38.750
Czech Rep	51.967	31.358	Poland	3.5956	3.5956
Egypt	5.6250	3.6016	Saudi	6.6316	6.6316
Ghana	391.1	236.00	Russia	384.482	236.000
Hong Kong	358.68	216.43	South Korea	196.22	118.400
India	70.433	42.500	Taiwan	63.695	63.695
Indonesia	15.840	9.3130	Thailand	61.235	36.950
Kenya	0.5019	0.3029	UK	54.423	32.840
Nigeria	141.69	85.500	UAE	6.0862	3.6725

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1.6372	1.0000	Oman	0.6380	0.6380
Brazil	2.9499	1.7800	Pakistan	0.4387	0.4387
China	13.719	8.2784	Philippines	64.218	38.750
Czech Rep	51.967	31.358	Poland	3.5956	3.5956
Egypt	5.6250	3.6016	Saudi	6.6316	6.6316
Ghana	391.1	236.00	Russia	384.482	236.000
Hong Kong	358.68	216.43	South Korea	196.22	118.400
India	70.433	42.500	Taiwan	63.695	63.695
Indonesia	15.840	9.3130	Thailand	61.235	36.950
Kenya	0.5019	0.3029	UK	54.423	32.840
Nigeria	141.69	85.500	UAE	6.0862	3.6725

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1.6372	1.0000	Oman	0.6380	0.6380
Brazil	2.9499	1.7800	Pakistan	0.4387	0.4387
China	13.719	8.2784	Philippines	64.218	38.750
Czech Rep	51.967	31.358	Poland	3.5956	3.5956
Egypt	5.6250	3.6016	Saudi	6.6316	6.6316
Ghana	391.1	236.00	Russia	384.482	236.000
Hong Kong	358.68	216.43	South Korea	196.22	118.400
India	70.433	42.500	Taiwan	63.695	63.695
Indonesia	15.840	9.3130	Thailand	61.235	36.950
Kenya	0.5019	0.3029	UK	54.423	32.840
Nigeria	141.69	85.500	UAE	6.0862	3.6725

Few happy returns for the unloved small caps

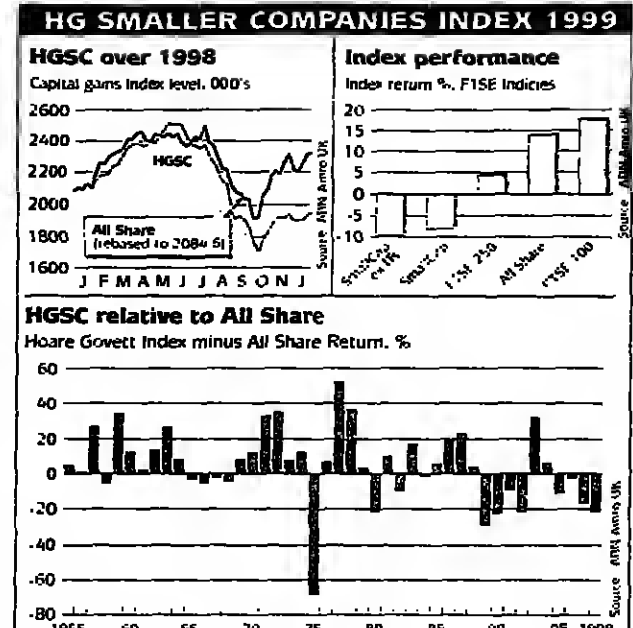
By NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

ANYONE WHO invested in smaller companies last year will know only too well how badly they performed compared to the gung-ho FTSE 100 constituents.

The latest Hoare Govett index of smaller companies, published yesterday, underlines the point. Its study shows that in 1998 the return on its smaller companies index was the seventh-worst since 1965. The relative return, compared to the All-Share, was the third worst on record.

Hoare Govett's smaller companies index measures the performance of the lowest tenth by market capitalisation of the main UK equity market, excluding AIM stocks. The cut-off market value for the index is £585m, although the average size is much smaller at just £91m.

These stocks have been the great unloved in 1998, just as they were in 1997, and the pattern which emerged last year was also similar to that in the previous year. Smaller companies began the year well; indeed, during the early months of 1998 they outperformed their larger cousins. By May, the return on the HGSC Index was 4 percentage points ahead of the All-Share.



But then it all began to go horribly wrong. By the year's end the smaller companies had produced a negative return for the year - of minus 4 per cent - coming in 17.8 per cent below the return for the All-Share.

The critical period was a disastrous third quarter. During the July to September period when the stock market travail was at its worst, smaller companies bore the brunt. The HGSC Index's returns

plunged by 21.8 per cent compared with a 12.5 per cent correction in the FTSE 100.

The process was another demonstration of the double whammy which often strikes the smaller companies: they seem to miss out on the euphoria that has fuelled the Footsie's charge, but when any correction comes, they get hit just as badly.

The record shows just how recently the divide between

large cap and small caps has emerged, and how marked it has become. Between 1965 and 1988 the annual return on smaller companies was higher than the All-Share for all but a handful of years. Their compound return was on average 6 per cent better than the All-Share. However, since 1988 they have only outperformed in three years, and the most recent of those was back in 1994.

The weighting of particular stock market sectors has been an important factor. The so-called sectors of telecoms, banking and pharmaceuticals have represented a small fraction of smaller companies. But the unloved sectors of diversified industrials, household goods and textiles are all heavily represented.

The outlook, sadly, is rather depressing. According to ABN, although smaller companies look cheap with a p/e ratio of 12 compared to an average of 20 for the All-Share, they could become cheaper still. That is likely to lead to more public-private deals.

10/11/11

Cricket: Engla

... assumes the rol

Holli

... and wind he
... Australian
... mainly and
... smile with
... the under
... "Inkable"
... "It's happen
... turned to me

... number still
... part young
... able on he
... under of re
... the Test
... James in the
... retained the
... of hotel
... tion in the
... he was net
... supplies of
... ration for the

... of nat
... still able
... more com
... "To
... know has
... "We start
... but not I
... it hasn't
... "If I got
... I wouldn't
... find."

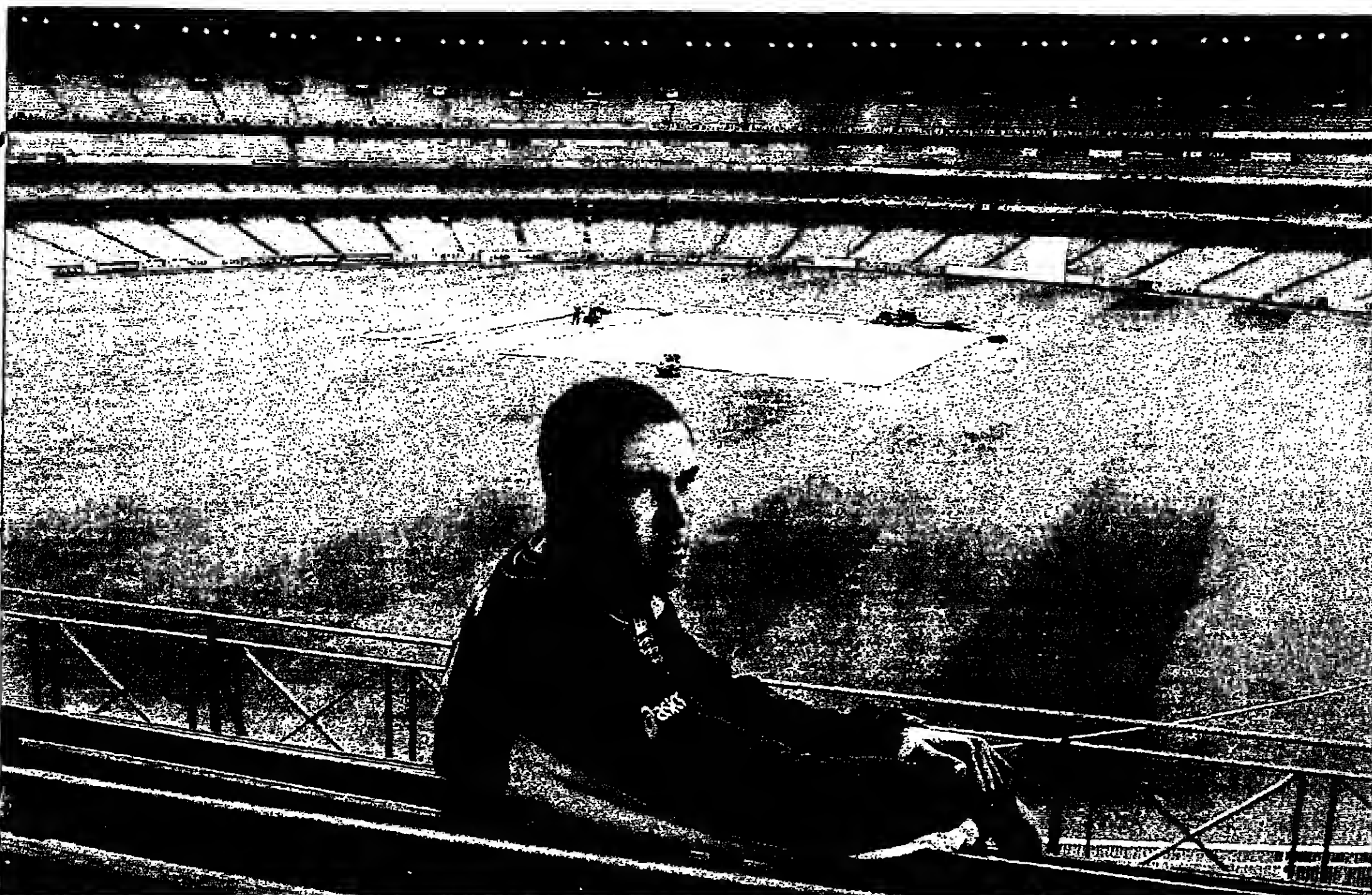
... after he
... of the
... of the
... cannot
... for senior
... and im
... that out
... He sus
... Australia

Not all

... and 26 hours
... on the
... to me
... whether
... the mira
... 7's return
... quarter 24
... by Bill
... of the
... Allan
... the Glas
... commit
... the Glas
... and I was
... and proper
... which
... some
... and the

SPORT

Cricket: England's bright young talent struggles to make his mark as injuries and lack of confidence take their toll



Ben Hollioake assumes the role of spectator at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. 'Sometimes, because you did so well early on, the public thinks that's what you should achieve every time' Reuters

'The General' in mood for fight

BY STEPHEN BRENKLEY

HE IS known as The General. This is because when Arjuna Ranatunga leads Sri Lanka he struts about as if he was Napoleon. Napoleon was not a diplomat either.

Thus, on the eve of his appearance before the match referee, Peter Van Der Merwe, two days after an apparent series of breaches of the game's code of conduct, Ranatunga effectively told everyone where they could shove it.

A different fellow, with a more uncertain view of himself and his place in the game, might have kept silent until after the hearing. But Ranatunga could not resist speaking to the television station in Adelaide the day before he met Van Der Merwe.

He steadfastly refused to apologise or to express regrets for his unprecedented behaviour on Saturday towards an umpire he clearly did not respect so much as scorn. "I feel I was standing by a colleague of mine, who is the best bowler Sri Lanka has produced," he said. His manager, Ranjit Fernando, could hardly have acted with more decorum.

Ranatunga played the key role in Saturday's match at Adelaide Oval between England and Sri Lanka. It was Muttiah Muralitharan, the off-spinner, who was no-halled for throwing, but it was Ranatunga who waded into battle on his behalf.

He argued with the umpire, Ross Emerson, lecturing him before leading his players to the perimeter of the pitch for 15 minutes while negotiations about continuing the match took place.

When play resumed he put Muralitharan on at Emerson's end and insisted the umpire stand where Ranatunga wanted by constantly scratching a line in the soil. Emerson said at one point: "I'm the umpire, I'm in control," which at that point was a patent exaggeration.

Ranatunga then took gamesmanship to its brink to mastermind the defeat of England with a wicket and two balls to spare. He looked as unruffled as ever as he spoke in his hotel room to Channel 7. The people who appointed umpires, he said, should appoint the people to do a job.

There had been no intention of staging a walk-off, he insisted, which is not what it looked like to anybody watching. "We never wanted to stop the game, that's for sure."

Only snippets of the interview were shown and the full version will go out on Sunday, when Ranatunga will have been dealt with. This is probably just as well since he was clearly in no mood for contrition.

Ranatunga, who has led Sri Lanka in more than 170 one-day internationals and wields much broader power than that of captain, said it was impossible to go back to the way things were. Sri Lanka may as well go back to playing friendlies if they changed their style.

Arguments of a similar conciliatory nature submitted to Van Der Merwe may not exactly constitute a plea for leniency. But Ranatunga, ever smiling, is serious about this and clearly wanted to go down fighting for Murali. As good generals do.

Ricky Ponting, the Australian batsman, has appeared before the Australian Cricket Board to face disciplinary action for being involved in a drunken brawl in a Sydney bar. Ponting was given a suspended fine of \$5000 (£2,000) and banned for another game in addition to the two matches he has already missed.

Hollioake feels the hard knocks

BEN HOLLIOAKE was asked what he had learned on the tour of Australia. His answer came certainly and quickly and despite the smile with which it was delivered, the underlying sadness was unmistakable. "I have learned I don't want to happen to me again what's happened to me on this tour," he said.

He left England in October still as the brightest of bright young things and three months on he knew he was in serious danger of returning to England as the forgotten man. He played in none of the Test matches and after six games in the one-day series he remained the only one of England's squad of 16 not to have played. Selection in the seventh was possible but he was not exactly gathering extra supplies of kit whittener in preparation for the moment.

Such is Hollioake's depth of natural assurance that he was still able to remember the lines more commonly associated with him. "To some degree the confidence has taken a knock," he said. "You start to think, 'Am I good enough', not 'I am good enough', but it hasn't taken such a knock that if I got picked for the next game I wouldn't back myself to get a hundred."

So he might, but whatever he achieves in the remainder of the Carlton & United series he cannot conceal the truth that his first senior tour has been an unwelcome and unexpected experience, and that not everything will come easily. He sustained an injury early on in Australia

BY STEPHEN BRENKLEY
in Adelaide

and by the time he recovered, even a losing team was difficult to break into.

What opportunities he had he failed to grasp. In the notorious defeat in Hobart by Australia A he was dismissed on a flat pitch by an occasional bowler, Matthew Elliott. Subsequently he was confronted with the criticism of David Graveney, the tour manager and chairman of the England selectors.

Graveney might have appeared slightly harsh in observing that Hollioake could not continue to live on two performances a long time ago (the 63 he made on his international debut against Australia and the 98 he made in the Benson and Hedges Cup final) but he was perhaps attempting a stab at psychology.

Hollioake defended himself robustly. He said his one-day county form had been sound last summer and that his bowling in all forms of cricket had been consistently good. But he must know, if he has developed the capacity to examine his own performances, that he has to do more to convince the selectors now. Making a maiden first-class hundred for Surrey would be a start.

It is probable that Hollioake is a big-game player and it is at least arguable that the selectors, having picked him at the age of 19, should simply have kept faith with him. As

it is, he has played only three Tests and six one-day internationals since he was initially selected in both forms of the game in 1997, and he could easily have trebled both numbers.

Hollioake's relaxed approach has also raised concerns, but presumably the selectors knew his character before they dallied with his potential. "It's something that I'm always going to be up against," he said. "But the management knows that when it's time to practise, I practise as hard as anyone."

"Having said that, I know I'm not the best netter in the world. You've got to have nets to keep in touch but there have certainly been times this tour when I've had a bit of netitis. Even when I'm in my best form on the park it is still hard work in the nets."

He lifted up his shirt to reveal a bruise on his chest inflicted in the nets while batting. It probably would not have happened in the middle, but the middle is somewhere that has become a foreign country.

Hollioake is an instinctive cricketer, which is what England need. The trouble with that, allied to a reluctance for nets, is that technical faults which occur are not so easily removed. There was a time last season, when Hollioake was called up to the England squad, that the management was said to be somewhat astonished at the way his batting had gained looseness. His chest-on bowling technique, too,

does not allow much margin for error if he is to make effective use of his bounce.

England have already invested too much in him to let him be wasted. What they have to decide is whether to ensure he accrues some county form (and that can be meaningless) or select him regardless, which will serve a purpose only if they keep on picking him and have got it right.

Hollioake is an extremely affable fellow and if he has a high opinion of his ability, that is as it should be. Others have encouraged him in this regard. He did not score that resplendent half-century against the Aussies on a lovely early summer at Lord's by having self-doubt.

"Sometimes, because you did so well early on, the public thinks that is what you should achieve every time. Maybe that's what I thought I should every achieve every time."

"I don't know what my form is like because I haven't played. But you never know what can happen. I may not play any of the games but then somebody gets injured and I could be the player of the final."

Mark Taylor, the captain of Australia, has been named Australian of the Year. The award comes amid speculation that Taylor is about to retire from the game. He admitted after receiving the highest honour available that possible retirement was weighing heavily on his mind. "I just want to enjoy the next two days with my family," he said.



Happier days: Ben Hollioake hits out on his way to 63 against Australia at Lord's in 1996 PA

Not all the best rugby is played at Twickenham

"WE'RE GIVING England 48 hours to come back in," a colleague on the sports desk of this paper said to me a week ago when I was fretting to him on the telephone about whether I had sufficiently covered the stirring events of the day.

In the event, the rover's return took rather less time, nearer 24 hours. It was celebrated by Bill Beaumont and Brian Balster of the Rugby Football Union, and Allan Hossie of the Five Nations committee, over pints of beer in the Glasgow pub (or bar, for Glasgow does not possess what I would call proper pubs) Drum and Monkey, which seems an appropriate name somehow in the circumstances.

Balster and the RFU's "chief executive", Francis Baron, remind me of the two little dickie birds sit-



ALAN WATKINS

ting on the wall in the rhyme: Fly away Brian, fly away Frank; Come back Brian, come back Frank.

They remind me also of George Brown, the Labour cabinet minister of the 1960s. Brown was forever threatening to resign and being

dissuaded from taking this course. Every so often he would flounce out but would be persuaded to return to the fold in... well, in about the time it takes for the RFU to restore England to the Five Nations Championship.

There came a point, however, when Brown resigned over the relatively trivial matter of a lack of consultation with him about the closing of the banks during a financial crisis. And this time his resignation was accepted. That was the end of George Brown.

I am not predicting that the same thing is going to happen to England, but there is clearly a danger of it happening.

In the *Independent* on Sunday two days ago, Chris Rea wrote that the real reason why the RFU's rep-

resentatives were behaving as they were had less to do with the appointment of Sky moocies, French television arrangements or the entry of Italy into the Five Nations than with the union's wish to set up a new competition involving the southern hemisphere nations. This competition would include England and, preferably, France as well but exclude Italy and the Celtic nations.

I was encouraged that Rea's view was more or less the same as mine, which I expressed here last week: that the evidence is that New Zealand, Australia and South Africa are quite happy with their present arrangements, though they may undertake more (in my opinion, too many) European tours when it suits them to do so. But they have

no wish to enter into any permanent relationship with England; even less so if France exclude themselves from it.

The evidence, again, is that the French have an affectionate regard for the Five (soon to be Six) Nations, and have no wish to leave home to take up with new partners who may possess all kinds of strange ways. Not even the most tunnel-visioned England supporter would maintain that, season in and season out, England have been the superior team to France over the past decade or so.

Certainly the English revival of the 1980s was a triumph for players and managers: for Geoff Cooke, Jack Rowell, Will Carling and Brian Moore, to name only a few. But times change. Moore is a solicitor

and a broadcaster. Poor (or it may be rich) Carling is a discredited figure, largely through his own fault. Rowell is associated with Bristol, Cooke is out of a job or, perhaps, is between jobs. For it looks as if he will join Bath after what must have been an unsettling time for him at Bedford.

True, England beat South Africa. But then, Wales very nearly beat them, too. As colleagues have written many times already, it looks like being the most open Five Nations for years. Graham Henry, the Welsh coach, still needs to find two wings of international class (for Gareth Thomas is injured), a loose-head prop and, perhaps, a second row partner for Craig Quinell.

The kindest thing to say about Scotland is that they may sur-

prise us yet. On current form, it looks as if the good-value bet is Ireland. Admittedly Dick Best's first-choice London Irish have, at most, only half a dozen Irish players in the side. Even so, Connor O'Shea, Justin Bishop, Niall Woods and Malcolm O'Kelly will be even better players this season than they were before.

And if Ulster win the European Cup at Dublin on Saturday, Irish confidence will be trebled. Jonathan Bell and Rob Henderson (if fit) are not going to be frightened by the Scott Gibbs of this world. David Humphreys at last looks like fulfilling his promise and potential.

Perhaps the RFU should accept for the time being that not all the best rugby in the British Isles is played at Twickenham.

UFG 11 01 1520

Liverpool make £2m offer to Fowler

LIVERPOOL HAVE made a new contract offer to Robbie Fowler, worth an estimated £2m a year, and hope to clinch his signing this week.

Fowler and his representative, George Scott, met Anfield officials at the weekend to thrash out a compromise deal after months of haggling. The England striker rejected the previous offer of £1.5m per week and was told there would be no more money from the club, but there has been an increase in the package.

FOOTBALL
By Alan Nixon

With wages, signing-on fees and loyalty payments Fowler will become the best-paid player at Anfield and one of the top earners in British football.

The Manchester United captain, Roy Keane, has given his club a scare by putting contract talks on ice for the rest of the season. The Republic of Ireland international has said that he does not want to discuss his

£40,000 per week demands until the summer.

United want Keane to sort out a new contract now, rather than have him enter the last year of his present deal with the prospect of a lucrative free transfer at the end of next season. Keane said: "I will only sign if the contract is right for me. I want the club to pay me what I think I'm worth. United have been good for me, but I've also been good for them."

The chances of the Brazilian forward Juninho returning to

English football with either his former club, Middlesbrough, or Aston Villa appear to have increased. The Spanish club's coach, Arrigo Sacchi, has admitted that Juninho does not feature in his first-team plans.

Juninho's father and agent, Osvaldo, hinted that Middlesbrough were the favourites to win his son's signature. "Middlesbrough have a good chance of signing him," he said. "We will talk to their chairman, Steve Gibson, next week. We get on with him very well."

The Cameroon international midfielder Marc-Vivien Foe yesterday completed his move from Lens to West Ham - according to officials at the French club.

The Yugoslavian international defender Slobodan Komljenovic hopes to seal a move to the Premiership after arriving at Southampton to begin a week's trial. The 28-year-old is valued at £2.5m by his German club, MSV Duisburg.

Barnesey expect to sign the Queen's Park Rangers striker

Mike Sheron for £1.5m today. The fee would equal the Oakwell club record.

The Crystal Palace midfielder Fan Zhiyi has escaped severe punishment from the Football Association despite pleading guilty to improper behaviour towards the referee Terry Hillborn.

The Chinese international, alleged to have manhandled the Newton Aycliffe official at the end of a highly charged 2-2 draw against West Bromwich at The Hawthorns in November,

has been banned for one match and fined £750.

Dundee have signed Coventry City's Scottish Under-21 international midfielder Gavin Strachan, the 20-year-old son of the Highfield Road manager Gordon Strachan, on loan until the end of the season.

The German midfielder, Andreas Mayer, has completed a £200,000 transfer to Aberdeen from the Norwegian club, Rosenborg Trondheim. The former Coventry target played for the Dons against Man-

chester United in Teddy Scott's testimonial last week.

Hartlepool United want Chris Waddle to become their new manager, in succession to Mick Tait. The former England winger, who was in charge at Burnley last season, is now helping out with coaching at Sheffield Wednesday.

Terry Christie has left Stenhousemuir after six and a half years in charge to become the new manager of Alloa. He succeeds Tom Hoedrie, who has moved to St Mirren.

Bergkamp fuels conspiracy theory

DENNIS BERGKAMP'S claim yesterday that Arsenal were being victimised by referees was met by a fervent rebuttal from a leading official, who found an unlikely ally in a former Gunners manager.

Bergkamp was speaking in the wake of Arsenal's 2-1 FA Cup win against Wolves on Sunday, during which Emmanuel Petit became the club's seventh player to be sent off this season and the 19th since Arsene Wenger became manager in September 1996.

Bergkamp said that players were being unfairly dealt with because of the club's reputation for indiscipline. "I know that for sure," the Dutch striker said. "Decisions are going against us because of it. If the men who make those decisions know

The striker's claim that Arsenal are being persecuted has provoked an instant response. By Nick Harris

about the reputation before the game then it can count against us. We have players booked, and sometimes it's hard to understand why."

Philip Don, the Premier League referees' officer, said he was sure that there was no anti-Highway conspiracy. "Referees go out to do a job and call it as they see it," he said, and added it was not in his officials' interests to make victims of anyone. "Referees cannot afford to go and victimise teams."

"There are independent observers at every game and referees get marked down for

making errors. At least 90 per cent of Premier League referees get marked out of seven (out of 10) or above. And this season I think it's around 95 per cent."

Although he was unwilling to comment on specific cases, Don said that if a referee believed a player had used abusive language to any official, then the rules had to be enforced. Steve Dunn, officiating at the Wolves game, said Petit was sent off for abusing a linesman.

"Strong language to an assistant is the same as to a referee," Don said. "It's a sending-off offence without a shadow of a doubt."

Petit's dismissal on Sunday was the second time he has been sent off this season, the first occasion being against Charlton in August. His red card at Wolves was due to bad language and he incurred one of his two yellow cards at Charlton for dissent.

Although Lee Dixon, Martin Keown, Ray Parlour, Gilles Grimandi and Patrick Vieira have all also been sent off since last August, only Dixon has been dismissed for mistimed fouls alone committed during the course of a match.

Ray Parlour was dismissed against Leeds for kicking Cyril Roof's head; Grimandi was sent off for butting Leeds' Alan



Emmanuel Petit becomes the seventh Arsenal player to be sent off this season during Sunday's cup tie Empics

Smith, and Vieira was shown a red card for elbowing Charlton's Neil Redfern.

Keown may have had his ban rescinded on appeal following his involvement as a peace-maker in the Paolo Di Canio incident at Hillsborough, but Arsenal would still seem to be the victims of their own inability to control tempers, whatever provocation they are at times

subjected to and whatever they believe the pre-conceived attitudes of the match officials to be.

For all their manager's protestations of victimisation - "I am very upset by what has happened and I just ask for an honest referee, that's all," Wenger said on Sunday - there is a feeling, even among Arsenal stalwarts, that referees are not

entirely to blame for the north Londoners' problems.

The Gunners' former manager, Terry Neil, conceded: "One thing is sure and that's it's not a healthy situation. I'm sure words have been spoken in private [about behaviour at the club]. He added: "You don't win what Arsenal football club have over the years without being competitive."

"The people I've got most sympathy for in football are referees."

Part of Arsenal's problem, Neil added, is that officials have to act on strict mandates from Fia. "People don't get sent off these days for sticking out on someone," he said. "It only takes a word, a gesture."

Both of which, Arsenal players seem to have a fondness for

Eritrea and Mauritius shock the giants of Africa

AFRICA
ERITREA AND MAURITIUS enjoyed success in the African Nations' Cup qualifiers at the weekend, embarrassing two of the continent's 1998 World Cup finalists.

Eritrea marked their home debut in the tournament with a goalless draw against troubled Cameroon, while the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius

held South Africa to a 1-1 draw. Meanwhile, the World Cup finalists Nigeria looked far from convincing in their 2-0 home win over Burundi.

The embarrassing draw in Eritrea was a further setback for Cameroon. They were suspended briefly at the start of the year by Fifa, world football's ruling body, for refusing to implement a new football administration structure.

As for South Africa, a team loaded with Europe-based professionals were favourites to romp home against Mauritius. But Desiré Periatombe, who plays for the French Second Division club Troyes, struck a second-half equaliser after South Africa had led at half-time through the former Leeds striker, Phil Masinga.

"We were let down by our midfield," the South African

defender Mark Fish, who plays for Bolton, said. "They never created enough for the strikers to have any real chances."

In Nigeria, goals from Garba Lawal and Finidi George gave the home team victory over Burundi in the first competitive match in charge for their new coach, Tsi Libregis - but an anticipated goal deluge did not materialise as Burundi looked the better side.

ITALY
ASPECTACULAR performance from the Brazilian striker Edmundo in Fiorentina's 3-0 away win against Empoli on Sunday night not only kept the Florence club on top of Serie A but effectively scotched rumours of turmoil within their squad.

Fiorentina's victory saw them maintain a three-point lead over second-placed Lazio. After Fiorentina's 2-0 defeat at Lazio two weeks ago, their coach, Giovanni Trapattoni, hit out at his players, telling them to stop squabbling.

It had been suggested that Edmundo and the Portuguese midfielder Rui Costa, refuse to pass the ball to one another. However, on Sunday Rui Costa said: "I've always considered Edmundo a great player, one of the best in the world."

TODAY'S NUMBER

6
The number of men who went on trial in Moscow yesterday accused of the 1997 contract killing of the head of the Russian ice hockey federation. The case was postponed on three previous occasions after the main defendant was taken ill.

Storm rout keeps Cardiff at bay

MANCHESTER STORM remained four points clear of Cardiff Devils after both sides recorded Sunday victories in the Sekonda Superleague.

Jeff Jablonski destroyed Newcastle Riverkings with a four-goal haul as Storm ran out 6-0 winners. Manchester had thrashed Newcastle 10-1 earlier

this season to equal the biggest winning margin in a Superleague game, and were four goals clear by the 11th minute, the rout started by Pierre Allard after 17 seconds. Brad Ruhacik claimed Storm's other goal.

In Wales, two third-period goals finally saw the Devils dismiss London Knights 3-0. A 7-3 victory in Nottingham the previous night appeared to take its toll on Paul Harvey's side, who held on to Nicky Chinn's opener for long periods of the game, but Derry Menard and Martin Lindman scored to keep Cardiff in touch with Manchester.

SNOW REPORTS in association with WorldCover Direct

SKI HOTLINE
Detailed independent snow and weather reports from 180 resorts

First, obtain the access code for the resort of your choice. Phone or Fax 0870 51 00 843 (the fax lists codes for 180 resorts)

To listen to the latest snow and weather report: Phone 0901 47 70 051 + code

For a fax copy of the latest snow and weather report: Fax 0906 55 00 086 + code

SKI HOTLINE SNAPSHOT
A detailed four-page summary of conditions in 180 resorts Fax 0906 55 00 601

Helpline: 0870 51 33 345
Calls to 0901 cost 60p per min, 0906 cost £1 per min, 0870 calls are standard national rate.

On or off piste, with WorldCover you're covered.

0800 365 121
ONE CALL AND YOU'RE COVERED

www.worldcover.com

Resort	Area open	Comment	Slopes (cm)	Last	Temp	Forecast
ANDORRA						
Val d'Aran	100%	Good skiing	100	125	13.1	-2C Changeable
AUSTRIA						
St Anton	100%	320cm snow	20	80	15.1	-7C Settled
St Anton	95%	Excellent high runs	30	290	14.1	-6C Sunny, mild
BULGARIA						
Borovets	80%	Needs fresh snow	30	40	14.1	-2C Sunny
CANADA						
Tremblant	100%	Fresh snow	40	60	20.1	0C Cloudy, snow
FRANCE						
Alpe d'Huez	80%	High runs good	40	140	14.1	1C Colder
Les Deux Alpes	50%	Sunny, poor snow	45	55	15.1	-2C Colder
ITALY						
Cortina	86%	Becoming colder	50	90	14.1	-7C Bright
S. Catherine	85%	Soft snow	30	80	11.1	-2C Bright, sun
NORWAY						
Hemsedal	100%	Good conditions	70	80	24.1	-1C Cloudy
SCOTLAND						
Swingler	90%	Firm grippy snow	20	45	23.1	-2C Clear, bright
SWITZERLAND						
Saas Fee	90%	High runs great	40	220	14.1	-9C Colder, dry
UNITED STATES						
Killington	80%	Packed powder	30	125	20.1	-3C Changeable

Information supplied by Ski Hotline

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

CHICAGO BEARS have recruited Dick Jauron as their new head coach after the former defensive co-ordinator with Jacksonville Jaguars.

Jauron was due to be presented at a press conference. Jauron was formerly defensive co-ordinator with Jacksonville Jaguars.

BASKETBALL

SUNDERLAND LADIES BASKETBALL BULETS 78 London Towers 68; Edinburgh Rocks 71 Thames Valley Tigers 68; Chester Jets 58 Milton Keynes Lions 85

CRICKET

The English Cricket Board are to step up their efforts to remove racism

WEEKEND POOLS FORECAST

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP	
1 Blackpool v Tottenham	1
2 Coventry v Liverpool	1
3 Everton v North Forest	1
4 Middlesbrough v Leicester	1
5 Newcastle v Aston Villa	1
6 Sheffield Wed v Derby	1
7 Southampton v Leeds	1
8 Wimbledon v West Ham	1
9 Sunderland v Chelsea	1
10 Charlton v Wolves	1
NATIONWIDE LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION	
1 Bolton v Norwich	1
2 Crewe v Shrewsbury	1
3 Huddersfield v Bristol City	1
4 Luton v Port Vale	1
5 Oxford Utd v Barnley	1
6 Shrewsbury v Walsley	1
7 Stockport v Walsley	1
8 Swindon v Bury	1
9 Tranmere Rovers v Walsley	1
10 Walsley v Walsley	1
11 Walsley v Walsley	1
12 Walsley v Walsley	1
13 Walsley v Walsley	1
14 Walsley v Walsley	1
15 Walsley v Walsley	1
16 Walsley v Walsley	1
17 Walsley v Walsley	1
18 Walsley v Walsley	1
19 Walsley v Walsley	1
20 Walsley v Walsley	1
21 Walsley v Walsley	1
NATIONWIDE LEAGUE SECOND DIVISION	
1 Blackpool v Macclesfield	1
2 Bristol Rovers v Colchester	1
3 Colchester v Colchester	1
4 Colchester v Colchester	1
5 Colchester v Colchester	1
6 Colchester v Colchester	1
7 Colchester v Colchester	1
8 Colchester v Colchester	1
9 Colchester v Colchester	1
10 Colchester v Colchester	1
11 Colchester v Colchester	1
12 Colchester v Colchester	1
13 Colchester v Colchester	1
14 Colchester v Colchester	1
15 Colchester v Colchester	1
16 Colchester v Colchester	1
17 Colchester v Colchester	1
18 Colchester v Colchester	1
19 Colchester v Colchester	1
20 Colchester v Colchester	1
21 Colchester v Colchester	1

ICE HOCKEY

NHL ALL-STAR GAME: North America 8 World Team 6

SENIOR SUPERLEAGUE: Manchester 6 Newcastle 0; Blackpool 3 Ayr, Cardiff 3 London 0, Sheffield 4 Nottingham 0.

ICE SKATING

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS (Prague) Men's qualifying group A: 1. L. Langer (AUT) 0.4; 2. A. Vagstad (NOR) 1.2; 3. B. N. Wilson (GB) 3.2.

MOTORCYCLING

The Italian Grand Prix is to ride for Yamaha's factory 500cc team in the coming Grand Prix season, even though he has still formally to sign a contract.

MOTOR RACING

The proposed Argentine Grand Prix has been officially withdrawn from the world championship calendar, motor sport's governing body, the FIA, announced yesterday. An agreement between the commercial rights holder and the local promoter could not be reached, the FIA said in a statement.

RUGBY UNION

NFL CUP Quarter-final draw: Aloumanu v Madsen; Burns v Bachelors; Dudley Kingwill v Sevens; Weston v Unifed. Ties to be played on Saturday 13 February.

SNOKER

REGAL WELSH OPEN (Cardiff) First round: 5 Bingham (ENG) 6-3; 6 Higgins (SCO) 5-0; 7 Snodgrass (SCO) 6-3; 8 Hogg (SCO) 5-4; 9 Sweney (ENG) 6-3; 10 Clark (ENG) 5-4; 11 Taylor (WAL) 6-3; 12 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 13 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 14 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 15 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 16 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 17 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 18 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 19 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 20 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 21 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 22 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 23 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 24 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 25 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 26 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 27 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 28 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 29 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 30 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 31 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 32 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 33 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 34 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 35 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 36 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 37 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 38 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 39 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 40 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 41 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 42 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 43 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 44 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 45 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 46 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 47 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 48 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 49 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 50 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 51 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 52 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 53 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 54 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 55 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 56 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 57 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 58 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 59 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 60 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 61 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 62 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 63 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 64 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 65 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 66 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 67 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 68 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 69 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 70 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 71 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 72 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 73 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 74 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 75 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 76 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 77 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 78 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 79 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 80 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 81 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 82 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 83 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 84 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 85 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 86 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 87 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 88 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 89 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 90 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 91 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 92 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 93 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 94 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 95 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 96 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 97 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 98 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 99 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 100 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 101 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 102 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 103 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 104 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 105 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 106 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 107 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 108 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 109 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 110 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 111 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 112 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 113 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 114 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 115 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 116 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 117 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 118 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 119 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 120 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 121 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 122 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 123 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 124 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 125 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 126 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 127 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 128 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 129 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 130 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 131 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 132 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 133 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 134 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 135 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 136 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 137 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 138 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 139 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 140 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 141 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 142 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 143 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 144 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 145 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 146 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 147 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 148 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 149 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 150 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 151 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 152 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 153 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 154 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 155 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 156 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 157 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 158 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 159 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 160 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 161 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 162 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 163 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 164 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 165 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 166 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 167 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 168 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 169 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 170 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 171 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 172 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 173 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 174 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 175 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 176 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 177 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 178 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 179 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 180 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 181 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 182 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 183 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 184 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 185 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 186 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 187 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 188 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 189 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 190 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 191 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 192 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 193 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 194 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 195 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 196 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 197 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 198 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 199 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 200 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 201 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 202 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 203 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 204 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 205 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 206 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 207 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 208 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 209 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 210 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 211 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 212 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 213 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 214 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 215 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 216 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 217 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 218 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 219 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 220 Davies (WAL) 5-4; 221 Jones (WAL) 5-4; 222 Evans (WAL) 5-4; 223 Williams (WAL) 5-4; 224 Davies (WAL)

SPORT

HOLLIOAKE'S ENGLAND STRUGGLE P19 • DUVAL'S DESERT DELIGHT P20

Collymore to seek stress counselling

STAN COLLYMORE is to seek stress counselling to help him overcome his "current difficulties."

It was thought that Aston Villa's £7m record signing would be on the carpet after failing to turn up for Saturday's FA Cup match against Fulham. But Villa have said that Collymore was not in a fit state to be considered and have vowed to help the former England striker through his problems.

Villa issued a brief statement after meetings during the day between Villa's manager, John Gregory, Collymore, his representative, Paul Stretford, and the club's board of directors. As a result of those talks, Collymore has put his career on hold while he seeks the counselling that he feels is vital.

The statement said: "Stan Collymore has made it clear that pressures and stress have been building up for a long period of time, which culminated in the decision by the club not to consider him fit to play on Saturday."

"Following this, Stan has declared that he wishes to seek further counselling to help him overcome his current difficulties." It added that the Villa's manager and board of directors had expressed their desire to help Collymore.

Gregory was unavailable for comment after the meeting and Stretford would only say: "We have had talks all day and I think the statement says

FOOTBALL
BY JOHN CURTIS

everything that has to be said. I am certainly not letting on when the counselling will get underway or where it will take place."

Collymore has expressed his unhappiness at Villa in recent weeks and last week spelt out his disappointment at being only a "peripheral" part of Gregory's title plans. The former Liverpool player had been a substitute for six of the previous eight matches before the shock Cup defeat by Fulham. Gregory had responded by urging Collymore to follow the example of Julian Joachim in fighting his way back into the side.

Then came Collymore's non-appearance for the Fulham match after Gregory had admitted he was originally selected to play another role from the substitute's bench.

Stretford insisted yesterday that Collymore had not gone AWOL and that the player had contacted the Villa physio, Jim Walker, on Friday, claiming that he was not fit to play. The extent of his condition has now been revealed and he may now face a long battle to overcome his problems.

Another errant striker, Mark Viduka, yesterday promised he is at Celtic to stay and that he will never again turn his back on the Glasgow club.

The Australian international striker lasted a mere 72 hours at Parkhead in December following his £3m signing from Croatia Zagreb, before leaving for Australia complaining of stress. Yesterday was his first public appearance with the club since his return.

Viduka was keen to avoid apportioning blame for his seven-week absence, saying his only concern now was launching his Celtic career on the pitch. He pointed to his unhappiness in Zagreb as the overriding factor in his swift departure from Scotland, but claims that his personal troubles are out of his system and will not return.

Viduka, who now wishes to be known as Mark rather than Marko, said: "I understand all this is not a usual occurrence, but it is hard to understand. I felt I wasn't ready to fulfil my contract without having a rest before that and getting things back into balance."

"Is there a guarantee I'll stay? I am back here - that is a good enough guarantee. I'm ready to start playing for Celtic and give my heart to the team."

"I thought at the time I first came here I would be able to take it in my stride, but the whole package was too much - including the pressure from the fans at Zagreb. The last months in Croatia were hard to take, and that only hit me when I came to Glasgow."

Football, page 23

American survives the curse of the seeds



Todd Martin serves during his fourth-round victory at the Australian Open in Melbourne yesterday to become one of only two men's seeds to reach the quarter-finals of the season's first Grand Slam. Report, page 22; Photograph: Reuters

Indian scorers dispute century

CRICKET

OFFICIALS AND scorers were at loggerheads yesterday in Gwalior, India, over whether or not the Pakistan batsman Inzamam-ul-Haq scored a century in the first innings of his side's drawn three-day match against India A.

Pakistan's captain, Wasim Akram, declared the first innings at a total of 334 for 6 on Saturday, and the scorers logged Inzamam's score at 98 not out. Pakistani officials later said Wasim had declared because the stadium scoreboards showed his individual total at 100.

Pakistan's manager, Sharyar Khan, said that the Indian officials had agreed to correct what he said was a communication gap, saying Inzamam had indeed completed his century. But the scorers stuck to their guns. "We have not changed anything. We have spoken to the umpires as well. If there is anything between Pakistan and the board, it is between them," scorer Sunil Gupta said.

Pakistan's coach, Javed Miandad, gave reporters an "unofficial" scoresheet that showed Inzamam's first innings score as 122, two runs less than the 124 given by the scorers. The two runs were found instead on Inzamam's total. A spokesman for the Board of Control for Cricket in India said a decision would be taken later on whether there was an anomaly in the score.

Inzamam narrowly missed a century in the second innings when he was bowled by the paceman Laxmi Ratan Shukla after he had scored 96.

Salim Malik and Inzamam saved Pakistan from potential problems. Salim struck 122 to lift his team from 23 for 5 to a total of 272 all out, boosting a 58-run first innings advantage to 330.

Pakistan's bowlers then restored control as India A stuttered to 111 for 5 before the close. Pakistan's five main bowlers took one wicket each, but Wasim Younis, punished in the first innings, conceded 40 in eight overs.

League snubs fans' plea

THE PREMIER League has rejected calls from fans' groups to oppose BSkyB's proposed £662.4m takeover of Manchester United. The Football Supporters' Association and the Independent Manchester United Supporters' Association want the League to back their fight against the satellite broadcaster.

The supporters' organisations feel the League should support them as they are helping its court case against the Office of Fair Trading over the television rights to the Premiership.

United's supporters' association may withdraw its support if the League does not reciprocate. The League is understood to be surprised by the timing of the objection and believes the two issues are separate.

A League spokesman, Mike Lee, said: "The issues at stake in our current court case remain the same. The supporters' organisations have recognised that the OFT pose a real threat to the fabric of the game. It would be wrong to trade support on other issues."

The League is understood to

feel the BSkyB takeover raises serious concerns which are down to the competition authorities to deal with. This is not satisfactory for the fans' groups, and they want the League's co-operation.

The chairman of United's supporters' association, Andy Walsh, said: "When the Premier League approached us to give evidence in the OFT case we saw it as the only way to retain some form of redistribution of wealth and parity within the Premier League. We're now reconsidering our position."

New order faces drug case farce

ATHLETICS

BY MIKE ROWBOTTOM

BRITISH ATHLETICS, due to launch itself into a brave new world today, will do so dragging behind it an embarrassing piece of unfinished business concerning an athlete who has failed a drug test.

At a press conference yesterday, UK Athletics spokesperson Jayne Pearce said the athlete could not be named, even though a B sample test had confirmed the original finding. Standard procedure rules that a committee now has to decide whether there is a clear doping case to answer - and owing to administrative confusion following the collapse into receivership of the British Athletic Federation in October 1997, no such committee is in place to do so.

A hastily formed body will review the case "within the next few days" according to Pearce, who read a statement of the UK Athletics position yesterday. "If it is a doping case, we can reveal the name. If it is not, we won't. We have to protect the confidentiality and rights of the athlete, and the principle that they are innocent until proved guilty."

Pearce was unable to comment on any other details of the case, but confirmed that what appears to be the first major doping problem the domestic sport has had since 1994 could not have come at a more awkward time. "We were on course

for transferring recognition to the new governing body tomorrow," she said, "but this adverse finding has slowed everything up."

The statement confirmed that a recent B test had confirmed a positive A sample given by a British athlete. "In view of the transition in governing body status from BAF to UK Athletics," it continued, "UK Athletics and BAF are working together to decide the procedures to be followed."

"Under BAF rules, a committee will be formed to review whether or not a doping offence may have taken place. The athlete is not suspended and will not be suspended unless and until that committee decides that a doping offence may have taken place."

Pearce stressed that the case is following established procedure, but acknowledged that, since the effective demise of the old BAF drug advisory group, the next link in the chain no longer existed.

Responding to the suggestion that an interim committee should have been set up for such an eventuality as has just occurred, she said: "The case is legally one for BAF to deal with, because the sport is still working to their rule book."

And their business is being dealt with by the administrators. But no one is dragging their feet over this issue. We hope to resolve it as soon as possible."

A resolution cannot come soon enough for a sport which stands on the brink of a new season needing to seal a five-year television deal with the BBC and to secure a number of sponsors for its key domestic events. UK Athletics needs to be clearly and independently established to ensure the smooth working of a sport which has picked itself up by its bootstraps since the dark days of autumn 1997.

The longer this latest doping case is unresolved, the more the sport in general is likely to be harmed by the inevitable speculation which will follow. And yet UK Athletics needs to proceed with caution to ensure it does not become involved in the kind of potentially costly court case which followed in the wake of Diane Modahl's successful appeal against the doping ban imposed on her five years ago.

The billing for today's announcement promised the "Launch (with a difference)" of UK Athletics. Unfortunately the difference now is that the launch is effectively held up on the slipway, and it will take some frantic efforts to free the sport's new vessel.

Join the AA now and a partner joins free

You don't have to be married, in a relationship, or related to benefit from AA joint membership. You just have to share the same home address. Normally, joint membership is an option costing up to £26. Now, with this offer it comes completely free. For a limited period only, two people can join and benefit from a year's AA breakdown assistance for the price of one.

And remember, with AA personal membership, you and your joint member are covered even when travelling in someone else's car.

- We have the world's largest patrol force, and fix more breakdowns at the roadside than any other motoring organisation.
- We are more likely to get you back on the road quicker than anyone else, saving you time and money.

*Available for a limited period. Certain conditions apply, call for details.

To our members we're not just a breakdown service, we're the 4th Emergency Service.



JOIN FROM £41

JOIN NOW CALL FREE

0800

444

999

PLEASE QUOTE OFFER CODE 6003

LINES OPEN 24 HRS OR JOIN ONLINE AT

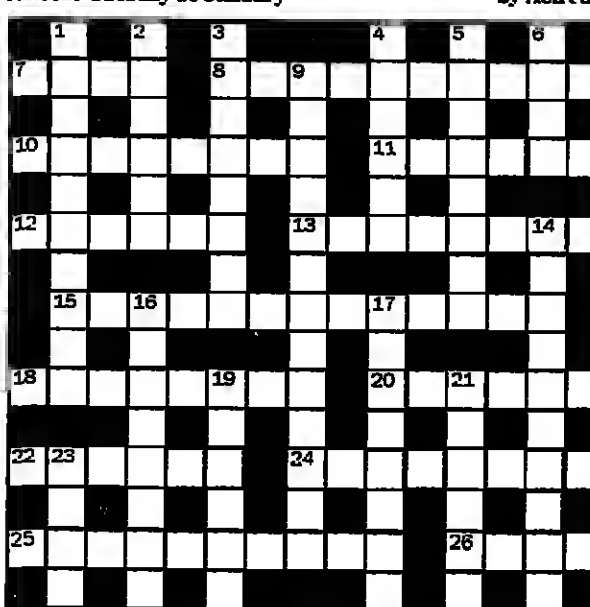
www.theaa.co.uk

THE TUESDAY CROSSWORD

No. 3829 Tuesday 26 January

by Aelred

Monday's Solution



1. DREAMER
2. GEAR
3. PRESTIGE
4. OFFENDING
5. A HEN
6. ENHANCED
7. AUNT
8. BILLY
9. GOLF
10. U.S. V. U.S.
11. ECHO
12. ANACARDIUM
13. DISAGREED
14. DELUSION
15. SOUS
16. SUBSTANCE
17. EYE
18. ALE
19. CURE
20. REPROVE
21. REUNITE
22. V. E. L. E. A. G. H
23. EARNEST
24. NOXIOUS

ACROSS

- Man in Europe admitting sexual attraction (4)
- One among county notables where servants are found? (10)
- Dales town, popular, is to become familiar (6,2)
- It encourages growth of the electric blanket effect? (6)
- Woman is turning yellowish-brown or a deeper colour (6)
- Thus getting a grass thrown in the sea (8)
- Patient result of being racked? (4,9)
- Canine makes one look and sound horn hard (3,5)
- Get ready to fire off again about cargo (6)
- Cheap US quarter? (3,3)
- Fix line which manicurist uses? (4,4)
- Makes inspection to grasp points of meagre quality (10)
- Woman's European genetic material (4)

DOWN

- Pieces put together by friend in a remarkable way (10)
- Trimmed dried fruit for ruler (6)
- Swayed, e.g., sadly unable to get a word in so? (8)
- These characters will get right woman (6)
- After butter one will provide smoked beef (8) in short, cut cheese (4)
- Find sow maybe in African developments? (5,2,6)
- Indicating everybody's enthralled by taking on of football star? (10)
- Mark has not been improperly embracing one (4,4)
- Appearing before all the others, looking most like a noble? (8)
- Make greater offer in attempt to escape? (6)
- Put up line taken by school inspectors ignoring society (6)
- Place in Twickenham? Yes and no (4)

TUESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION

'I'd like to thank my Grandpa, my agent, and 84 hungry, star-struck, freelance, free-loading journalists'

What an emotional evening it was. Gwyneth Paltrow, quivering like a flower in the breeze as she accepted her Golden Globe award for best comedy actress in *Shakespeare in Love*, could not hold back the tears as she paid tribute to her sick grandfather, Jenna Elfman, honoured for her performance in the TV series *Dharma and Greg*, thanked her mother and father "for giving birth to me", Ed Harris's list of thank-yous for his best supporting actor award (for *The Truman Show*) included God Himself - "for giving me the gift of life".

Sunday night's star-studded bash at the Beverly Hilton displayed all the senseless hyperbole, the sweeping proclamations of universal love, the tears, glitter and occasional flashes of genuine wit that we have come to expect from that archetypal Hollywood awards ceremony, the Oscars. Only these weren't the Oscars, but the Golden Globes - the influential, closely scrutinised precursor to the Academy Awards that have been described as a kind of New Hampshire primary of the Hollywood prize-giving season.

In a film world where marketing is king, and nominations for big awards translate into millions at the box office, the Globes are serious stuff - serious enough for every one of Sunday night's lucky winners, even if they were too emotional to remember the names of their co-stars, or pay reverent homage to the event's sponsors, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

Who?

Leaving the fate of one of Hollywood's biggest nights of the year in the hands of a bunch of journalists may seem suspect enough, but the Foreign Press Association does not even live up to the dubious respectability of its ponderous title. We are not talking about respected critics here, or even the carefully selected representatives of major newspapers and media organisations from around the world. No, the HFPA is little more than a pampered clique, an 82-member body largely made up of freelancers and part-timers which jealously guards its privileges and makes it supremely difficult for outsiders - even bona fide reporters from major publications such as *Le Monde* - to penetrate its world of special advance screenings, celebrity lunches and all-expenses-paid trips to film festivals.

For years the HFPA was considered a bit of a joke, and film stars treated the Golden Globes - if they bothered to turn up at all - as an excuse to have a laugh, drink too much and josh each other at the podium microphone. But that was before the miracle-working powers of network television intervened.

Last year, 24 million people in the United States alone followed the proceedings on NBC; it attracts so much top-dollar advertising that a relatively unfrilly ceremony takes more than three hours to unspool on prime time. The foreign press's ability to predict, and possibly influence, the mainstream sensibilities of the Academy (four of the last five Oscar-winning films were also Golden Globe recipients) has simply overwhelmed the frequent ethical misgivings about a voting body that receives publicity perks and other favours from the makers of the films it is asked to pronounce upon.

Compared to the Academy, whose 3,000-odd members are all industry professionals and are banned from receiving any perks from the studios beyond videotapes of their films, the Foreign Press Association looks distinctly eccentric. Its members have included a retired engineer, the chair of the pan-African studies department at Cal State university, a man who markets automobiles, and a shop assistant in a hi-fi store.

The body has admitted that at least 40 per cent of its members are not full-time journalists, but the rules stipulate only that members should show proof of four published articles or broadcast pieces per year. There are an awful lot of submissions from writers claiming to write "for Costa Rican and Czech publications".

When *The Washington Post* published a widely publicised denunciation of the Foreign Press Association two years ago, it discovered that a correspondent for *Le Monde* had been turned down for membership four or five times. Under the group's bylaws, a sitting member has the power of veto over any applicant - even one who works for a competing paper.

The attractions of membership are undeniable. Press screenings of new films are usually accompanied by lunch or dinner, and invariably followed up by exclusive interview opportunities with the director and leading actors. Foreign



Why does the industry put up with such a dubious crowd? One answer is that the Golden Globes, having become an accident on the path to the Oscars, have now become too prominent to ignore, and hang the niceties. Another, loudly proclaimed in publications such as *The Washington Post* and *Rolling Stone*, both of which have aimed broad jabs at the event, is the very suggestibility of the HFPA. The studios can lavish gifts and attention on a group of hungry, star-struck pseudo-journalists, the argument runs, and in return their films and stars can be rewarded with the glare of media publicity.

Certainly, there have been occasions when the foreign press's activities have aroused widespread suspicion. In 1981, HFPA members were treated to several days of entertainment in Las Vegas by Meshulam Riklis, married at the time to Pia Zadora. When Zadora was named "new female star of the year" for her work in the eminently forgettable movie *Butterfly*, it caused such a storm that the Globes were considered off limits for network television for several years.

There were similar murmurs in 1993 after Al Pacino was named "best actor" for his work in

ities, the American Foundation for AIDS Research, is chaired by Sharon Stone, and she is a regular fixture at the awards ceremony.

The complaints and press denunciations have had some effect. The current president of the Foreign Press Association, a German journalist called Helmut Voss, has promised a review of the association's admissions procedure. As part of its broadcasting agreement for the Golden Globes, NBC this year required that association members sign a waiver agreeing not to accept excessive gifts or hospitality.

The Washington Post reported that this covered "any gifts other than those that are the customary promotional gifts of the studios" - wording that, the paper suggested, was vague enough to leave plenty of room for abuses.

Although this year's awards were broadly in line with industry expectations, with *Shakespeare in Love*, *Saving Private Ryan* and *The Truman Show* winning the lion's share, that has not stopped gossip over some nominations. Terrence Malick's war epic *The Thin Red Line* received not a single mention - which irked the studio, Twentieth Century Fox, enough to point out that less than 50 per cent of the HFPA had turned up to the special screening.

Meanwhile *Patch Adams*, a Robin Williams comedy, earned itself a best film nomination in the comedy/musical section even though it was roundly panned by every leading newspaper.

None of these misgivings was aired at the ceremony itself, of course. The closest thing to sarcasm came from Jack Nicholson, recipient of a lifetime achievement award and a man too well established in the business to have much to lose. With his deadpan delivery and wickedly ambiguous smile, he said he particularly appreciated the award because it didn't come from a peer group. "The Hollywood foreign press is a loose group of guys and gals," he said. "You almost feel you could go out and have fun with them."

Otherwise, the tone was of impeccable deference. HFPA President Voss, a veteran writer for the Springer press group, perhaps summed it up best as he was introduced on to the stage - looking for all the world like a man who can't believe his good fortune at being the object of such prestigious adulation.

"To be a journalist, have an accent like Erich von Stroheim and be kissed by Sharon Stone," he gushed. "Only in America."

BY ANDREW GUMBEL

press members are invariably showered with freebies - not just baseball caps and T-shirts, but valuable gifts such as a silver money-clip to promote Martin Scorsese's movie *Casino*.

Trips to locations and film festivals are common, with the association usually paying for the flights and the studio picking up the hotel bill. Members who may spend much of the year pursuing entirely different forms of employment can find themselves on the receiving end of an all-expenses-paid return trip to Cannes or Venice.

Thanks to the Golden Globes, there is money galore for such enterprises. According to tax returns and other documents published in the entertainment newspaper *Variety*, the Foreign Press Association made \$1.5m from the 1997 event and - largely because of strict rules governing what non-profit organisations can and cannot spend money - has a cash pile of about \$3.5m. There are plans to build a new headquarters, complete with state-of-the-art screening facilities. To the association's credit, it also gives increasing chunks of cash to charity.

Scent of a Woman. A few weeks earlier, the HFPA had been off in New York on a promotional trip that included interview time with Pacino. The scandal was muted by the fact that Pacino gave a genuinely impressive performance - one that also netted him the Best Actor Oscar.

Occasionally prominent film-makers have complained about lavishing so much attention on the foreign press. In 1993, the director Rob Reiner complained to *The New York Times* that the exclusive press conferences he had given had seemed to be little more than an opportunity for HFPA members to have their photographs taken with their favourite movie stars. Such complaints are rare, however, because of the sheer power of the Hollywood publicity machine.

More often, stars and studios will actively cultivate the HFPA. After a press conference to promote *Casino*, in which she played the wife of a mafioso casino operator, Sharon Stone sent handwritten thank-you notes to each member. She went on to win the Golden Globe and an Oscar nomination. One of the HFPA's favourite char-

ONLY A CRACKPOT
WOULD pay
twice as much
AS THEY NEED TO
for phone calls.



Why help BT make another \$3.2 BILLION profit again this year? First Telecom can save you 50% off national and international calls to over 230 countries. We won't need to touch your existing phone, line or number. Just add First Telecom's service to your existing BT phone and join our 300,000 customers. You'd be potty not to.

8000 458 4647

FIRST TELECOM

SAVINGS BASED ON COMPARISONS BETWEEN FIRST TELECOM EASY PHONE AND BT STANDARD RATE. CONTACT AS AT 01/99.

INSIDE	Letters	2	Arts	9	Listings	15-16	MEDIA
	Leaders and comment	3-5	Visual Arts	10	Radio	17	
	Obituaries	6-7	Health	11-12	Satellite TV	17	
	Features	8	Media	13-14	Today's TV	18	

INCLUDING APPOINTMENTS

After the Lords

Sir: I am alarmed that, although David Aaronovitch ("Some thoughts, your Lordship, on the reform of your House", 21 January) says that we need a "mostly elected, legitimate and powerful second chamber" he does not follow out the logic of this: it must be wholly elected to be legitimate and powerful.

It should represent different constituencies from MPs. Regions, particularly in England, need elected representation so that the whole of the United Kingdom can have sensible links with the European Union's important Council of Regions.

It should not include bishops or any other religious nominees. As a Methodist, I am only too aware of the baleful effects the entwining of church and state has had on both. It is 350 years since Cromwell tried unsuccessfully to reform our polity by root and branch reform; let us not miss another opportunity to become democratic.

JOHN D ANDERSON
Baldon, West Yorkshire

Sir: Lord Strathclyde has asked whether hereditary peers "are not entitled to know where we are heading" before leaving the stage. The answer is unequivocally "No". If only because of the offensive manner in which they appear to have blackmailed our elected government into allowing some of their number a continuing voice in Parliament.

They should go and go now. No tumbrels await them in Parliament Square and for those with ambition and talent other avenues into politics are open.

The future of the second chamber depends on a clear definition of its functions; for example, whether these should continue to include those of the ultimate court of appeal for the UK and a number of overseas countries. From this, with three minutes' thought, its constitution will follow - though, as Houseman remarked, thought is arduous and three minutes is a long time.

BRIAN ELMS
Ashburnham, East Sussex

Sir: If the House of Lords replacement is to be decided by popular vote, who are we likely to end up with? Sundry pop singers, sportspeople, TV "personalities" plus Richard Branson.

The country already has a pool of individuals of varied political persuasion with a proven record of working for the public, overseeing large budgets within tight spending limits, and political acumen. These are our retiring lord mayors. List the county, city and town councils with the 500 biggest budgets and each year the retiring mayor from one third of the list would serve for three years. The house would be far more representative than at present.

Even changes to signs would be minimal: simply change the name to "the House of Lord Mayors".

RN FRANKLIN
Birmingham

Sir: Felham Barton (letter, 22 January) asks if anyone can explain why other than a completely elected replacement for the House of Lords is even an option. I'll try.

A completely elected replacement would be another House of Commons. It is enough that we have one of those already. And what would it do? Act in the name of the electorate to limit the will of the electorate?

Such a house would be full of politicians, for goodness' sake. The breadth of experience, wisdom and perspective would be diminished dramatically. We will have more elections, more politics and it will cost more.

DAVID CHANDLER
Bromley, Kent

Sir: Felham Barton asks whether there is any case for a second chamber which is not directly elected. Well, the argument is that the house should continue to have some independent members who, vote on the merits of legislation

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity



Staten Island Ferry No 2: A ferry passes the Statue of Liberty at sunset

Edward Webb

rather than on party lines. But do they? When I was chief lobbyist to the GLC during its campaign against abolition we noticed that nearly a third of the cross-bench peers voted consistently with the Tory government (four of them were said to be in receipt of the Conservative whip) and almost a third voted with the opposition. The rest appeared to cast their votes in a genuinely independent way.

I suggest to Lord Wakeham that, at the first meeting of his Royal Commission, a university is commissioned to produce a research study showing how the "independent" peers voted on major issues during the last 10 years. Were they really independent? If not, the case for nominated cross-bench members collapses.

Provided the powers of the new second chamber are laid down in statute and not left to conventions and time-honoured practices, there is no need for the Commons to feel threatened by a directly elected Senate. Only the "great and the good" hoping to be nominated for a place in this exclusive club will be disappointed. Well, tough.

ROLAND FREEMAN
Salisbury

Sir: The Government has announced that an Appointments Commission that will create "people's peers". We should finally get a more representative input into the British political system. But yet again we still have no input from youth.

Was it not Tony Blair who said he wanted a "young country"? Will we ever see a broader age range in the Lords, including significantly younger peers, who understand youth's problems?

The Bishops have their say in the Lords and there are many different specialists among the cross-benchers, so when is the New Labour government going to do something for the future people of this country, rather than the past?

OLLE COCHRAN
Brentwood, Essex

Sir: On the radio the other day I heard an announcer rebuffed for addressing a knight as "Mister" - "Sir Terrence, if you please!" came the huffy correction; and I am sorry to say that the broadcaster sounded genuinely apologetic.

My reflections are further prompted by Andreas Whitam Smith's column (25 June) about the title "Lord": he should widen his target to include all honorary titles. The media could help there. What a healthy innovation it would be if a newspaper announced that it would not in future use such titles. It would report that Mr Bloggs had been ennobled but continue to refer to him as Mr; the same with knights. Others would follow the example, and social practice in due course be reshaped, so that such honours would not have their current divisive effect.

NEVILLE MAXWELL
Oxford

Safely to school

Sir: I write in the light of recent events to call on all parents and teachers to consider carefully how they are introducing the children in

their care to the concept and skills of personal safety.

Our work as the national charity for personal safety has taught us that if young people are taught how to instinctively avoid dangerous situations, they are much more likely to avoid being victims.

As far as travelling to school is concerned we recommend that parents contact other parents and the school to discuss strategies for ensuring that children have arrived at school and that their journey to school is safe. It is hard to let children do things on their own, but if they are not allowed out alone they will never learn to be safe.

Parents should help children plan routes to school, taking note of phone booths and public places to go for help. They should talk through strategies for recognising and coping with potential danger and provide children with a charge card for making a telephone call.

This is another of those conversations that parents should not avoid having with their children. DIANA LAMPLUGH
Director
The Suzy Lamplugh Trust
London SW14

IN BRIEF

product of some rational consultation and thought process. This is in contrast to the lottery faced by infertile couples, many of whom have little choice but to pay thousands of pounds for treatment because they live in the "wrong" part of the country. NICOLA LEE-BROWNE
Wickham, Kent

Sir: There has been a lot of discussion about the high cost of Viagra and whether the NHS can afford to prescribe it, but I do not think these costs have been put into context. The cost of a single pill is about the same as a packet of fish and

Victims of Taliban

Sir: We were astonished at Peter Popham's suggestion that the right of women to healthcare, education and employment in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan is an inappropriate "Western assumption" on the part of aid agencies ("How the children of Kabul are sacrificed to sexual politics of the West", 16 January).

We left Kabul not because the accommodation imposed on us by the authorities was not comfortable enough, as Popham suggests.

The Taliban authorities had imposed such severe restrictions on medical work that it had become impossible to help the most vulnerable people, namely women and children. The authorities had previously banned women from general hospitals, and outlawed the training and employment of female medical staff, the only health workers allowed to treat women - this in a country with one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the world.

Medical ethics demand that all

patients be treated equally regardless of their gender. We will return to the Afghan capital when the authorities allow us to resume our work in a principled way.

However, we do not agree with the blanket funding bans currently imposed by the British government and the European Union on Afghanistan. The situation in the Afghan provinces is very different from Kabul and aid agencies are able to provide assistance in a fair and principled way in many areas. Such life-saving work should be continued and supported.

ANNE MARIE HUBY
Executive Director
Medecins Sans Frontières (UK)
London EC1

Mandy's election

Sir: Roy Hattersley was mistaken in his review of Mandy (23 January) concerning Peter Mandelson's appointment as the Labour Party director of communications.

The National Executive was heavily factionalised in 1985 and on the day (24 September) there was 24 votes round the table. At the end of the interviewing procedure 12 votes on the right were lined up behind Peter and 12 votes were behind the left candidate.

During the interviews Neil Kinnock prevailed upon myself and another member of the left faction to switch our votes to Peter, which, after much soul-searching, and to help Neil build the team he wanted, we both eventually did. Peter was therefore elected by 14 votes to 10.

After the interviews I telephoned the unsuccessful left candidate to apologise for the way I had voted.

She was gracious in defeat and has said on many occasions since that we appointed the best person to the job. The left faction was much less forgiving and we received the usual ritual denunciation. The rest is history. TOM SAWYER
London SE6

Young soldiers

Sir: Thank you for the informative article "Ban on soldiers under 18 resisted by Britain and US" (18 January). The problem is not just the age at which soldiers are recruited, or even the young age at which they are sent into battle, but the uniquely British system which we term "the five year trap".

The MOD has said that "young servicemen ... could leave at any time during their basic training". However, basic training, for those who join before 18 years, means a period of only five months, from the second to the sixth month of service.

Six months after signing a document which most of them do not understand, the 16-year-old soldiers are committed to full-time service at least until the age of 21 plus three months, and to Reserve obligation until the age of 40.

In 1996 Dr John Reid promised a delegation of which I was a member that, when Labour was elected and he became Minister for the Armed Forces, the recruitment contracts for under-18s would be reformed. He suggested keeping the present five-month recruit's right of discharge but giving an additional one-off chance to leave at the age of 18, with a financial bonus for those who remained.

Not only has this promise not been kept but the Government has intensified a recruitment campaign targeted at younger teenagers.

GWYN GWYNTOPIER
At Ease voluntary counsellor
London E1

Unknown killers

Sir: Mr Young ("Killers at large", letter, 18 January) seems to believe that psychiatrists have supernatural powers to predict human behaviour and consequently he saddles them with a responsibility they cannot sustain. His belief is a delusion common among the public.

In truth, although psychiatrists come into contact with many potentially dangerous people, they are unable to predict whether or when a given person will commit an act of violence.

One known important factor which increases the likelihood of criminal behaviour, including apparently irrational violence, is the use of illegal drugs. However, it is still impossible for a psychiatrist, or anyone else, including close relatives, to predict when a person will take a drug and in what circumstances the drug will induce a state of inclination towards violence.

Dr ANDREW WILSKI
Consultant Psychiatrist and
Medical Director
Fennbury Hospital, Mental Health
Services
Tunbridge Wells, Kent

Long night train

Sir: I wonder if Roger Hill will receive compensation when he has posted his claim form to SNCF (letter, 23 January).

I travelled from Zurich to Paris in September 1997. The train came to a standstill somewhere in mid-France in the early hours of the morning and was more than three hours late arriving in Paris. There was no refreshment car as it was an overnight train due in around 5am, so the passengers were hungry and thirsty by the time we arrived.

No explanation was given and although compensation forms were handed out when we left the train there was no suggestion of an apology.

I duly posted my form and am still waiting for my compensation. CATRIONA WHEELER
Lincoln

Top banana

Sir: In her letter (22 January) on the banana dispute, Glensy Kinnock asks: "If the worst happens and the EU fails, what will Bill Clinton do?" Surely recent history shows the answer - he'll authorise the bombing of Brussels. JOHN HAWGOOD
Durham

A beginner's guide to the art of tax avoidance

Yes, it's panic time for those of you who have not yet submitted your tax forms! The end of January is the deadline, after which the Inland Revenue will come knocking on your door in the middle of the night, asking for money and uttering hideous cackling laughter. (See my leaflet "Can I Claim Self-Defence After Shooting a Tax Official in My Own Home?", £2 + p.p.)

There is still time, however, to avoid this fate, and for those of you who want to get their forms in on time but are finding it a nightmare to fill them in, I am conducting a tax surgery today to clear up the most common problems.

I WONDER if you can help me. I have recently been involved in the building of a massive dome in

Greenwich for the celebration of the millennium. To enable this to be financed, I arranged for a huge loan to be made to me which I didn't really get around to mentioning to anyone else. I have now been removed from being in charge of the building of the dome, which means that when the loan comes to light in my absence, it is going to cause a massive scandal, huge national embarrassment, snap general election and so on. Is there a way in which I could transfer the details of this loan outside the country now, so as to avoid them becoming public later?

Yes. Send for my leaflet "20 Different Ways in which Cabinet Ministers Can Get Loans Registered in the Cayman Islands to Avoid Undue Publicity and Notoriety" (£200 + p.p.)

I WONDER if you can help me. I am the ex-president of a South American country directly south of Peru and am currently spending several months in Britain under house arrest while waiting for a decision on whether I can leave the country. To while away the time I have been writing my life story which I have tentatively entitled *All Right, I Admit It! I Was the Dictator from Hell! So What Are You Going to Do About It?*

To do some research on some of the murkier parts of my past, I have had to join Amnesty International and thus get access to statistics on my own period in power, which has been very useful. Can I claim my Amnesty membership as a legitimate tax-deductible expense? Yes. Though I would advise you not



MILES KINGDON
"I wonder if you can help me. I have recently been involved in the building of a massive dome..."

to mention it the next time you are involved in a case in front of the Law Lords.

I AM the president of a committee which helps to choose the sites for the Olympic Games. Recently I have been shocked to discover that the members of my committee have been taking bribes to ensure that certain cities get the vote for the Winter Olympic Games, not to mention the summer ones. The answer is quite clear. As president, you should have been aware of this. You must now resign.

No, no, that is not the question. I never resign. The question is this. If the committee members were discovered to have passed on some of their ill-gotten gains to me, would I be liable to tax on it? Are bribes in fact taxable? Or being undercover in the first place, and therefore outside the law, are they also exempt from legal things such

as taxes? This is purely hypothetical, you understand. If I were you, I would send up for my leaflet "Why the Presidents of Some International Organisations Should Go Out and Throw Themselves from the Top of the Nearest Building at the First Opportunity, in a Purely Hypothetical Sort of Way, Of Course" (£2.50 + p.p.).

I HAVE recently resigned as the leader of a major political party in Britain, and have been deluged with offers to write my memoirs. Political memoirs are always deadly dull exercises in evasiveness and I am loath to add to their number, but is there any tax incentive in not writing your autobiography? No, but you will make more friends than any other living politician if you don't.

I AM the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain and have recently been engaged in bombing Iraq in order to distract attention from my ex-wife's recent book about me. However, we also have a very real reason for bombing Iraq, and that is that Saddam Hussein has been developing fearsome weapons of his own. We don't want him to spend lots of money developing fearsome weapons. We want him to spend lots of money buying fearsome weapons from the West, thus boosting British arms sales. That's why we're bombing him. I see. But do you have a question?

NO. I just wanted to stress that all this bombing costs money, and that means taxes, and that means all of you getting your tax returns in as soon as possible. Thank you.

There is n
where gur
private fie

NORTHERN IRELAND'S p
another dilemma. Although
remain largely in place as far
evidence is emerging that so-
are on the increase in the p
This is a matter just as so
being bombed. An attack in
because warnings were phr
more press attention than the
go under the relatively innoc
though the latter have done i
harm. The Government has
a blind eye to these beatings.
lively been treated as a speci
Terrorist gangs have mos
among Northern Ireland's p
on which extortion, drug-d
rife. This prevents the estab
that Northern Ireland so de
mines the rule of law. If pos
mean a return to normality. T
This is the reason senior I
the whole peace process to b
including Frank Field and F
of Labour's Northern Irish
Commons motion arguing tha
time while the organisation
members continue to main
from members of a party h
nationalism, this should ser
and the IRA that the pathe
public policy is wearing thin.

Mo Mowlam and Tony Blai
to play, since there is so litt
ical process. Unionists will v
of any Northern Ireland Ex
missioning of arms: the Gov
concessions in that directio
have left is the release of pri
Prisoner release should be
ment still has some bargai
should also be tied to decon
will collapse anyway withou
missioning. This is a danger
a violent response from the p
leverage the Government no
British mainland, relieved
of some new atrocity, should
fellow citizens in Northern I
of intimidation. That is unac
ignores it, its negligence will

There
cho

There
cho

FORNET DNA. Proof of our close li
to the insecure, competitive, sla
amazing troglodytes of the Ice A
is nowhere more evident in mode
richer than when we buy and sell
houses, or choose our children
schools. The trust and restraint th
characterise most social transactio
disappear, and are replaced by a d
selfishness. Even sweets we
adopt Sudanese orphans and a
portions of recycling turn into m
sters when there's a chance of
extra five grand on the house sale
then junior can't get into that li
school with the great reputation.

Over the weekend, readers of T
fall on Sunday were diverted by
fantastic splash headlines "Pare
over Blair in School Pl
The mummies and daddies
were braced off becau
the right kids, all of them pupils i
local Catholic Sacred Heart prim
school, had failed to get places in
Sacred Heart comprehensive sch
two yards or so away in Ham
with, west London. Based on the
daughter, Kathryn (based, of cou
in Westminster) had been admitte
Over other issues the parents v
allowed themselves to be interview
by The Mail on Sunday might h
used more discretion before sou
off against the admission of one s
sister to the Sacred Heart. But this
person stuff. A Mrs Ma
Mayrokelafos (which I think is Gr
for "big brain") demanded: "W
right has Tony Blair to get his da
ter into our school?" And a Linda C
asserted that, "It's simple - the Bl
have taken somebody's place."

ONE OF the biggest problems
in lacking corruption is defin
ing it. When does nepotism
and cronyism become bribery
and corruption? There has
been demonstrated corruption
involved in the granting of the
Lake City. But what of the bla
some cases given by, and in
regates in Melbourne's 1996
Olympics bid? Had the six
African delegates been given
the new cars they asked for in

THE INDEPENDENT

1 CANADA SQUARE, CANARY WHARF, LONDON E14 5DL TELEPHONE: 0171 293 2000 OR 0171 345 2000 FAX: 0171 293 2435 OR 0171 345 2435
THE INDEPENDENT ON THE INTERNET: WWW.INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

There is no peace where gunmen rule private fiefdoms

NORTHERN IRELAND'S peace process now faces yet another dilemma. Although the paramilitary ceasefires remain largely in place as far as bombings and killings go, evidence is emerging that so-called "punishment beatings" are on the increase in the province itself.

This is a matter just as serious as if the mainland were being bombed. An attack in London that killed no one, because warnings were phoned in, would attract much more press attention than the maimings and shootings that go under the relatively innocuous title of "beatings", even though the latter have done more physical and emotional harm. The Government has seemed so far to be turning a blind eye to these beatings. Northern Ireland has effectively been treated as a special case; this must cease.

Terrorist gangs have most power in their private fiefs among Northern Ireland's working-class housing estates, on which extortion, drug-dealing and intimidation are rife. This prevents the establishment of that civil society that Northern Ireland so desperately needs, and undermines the rule of law. If peace means anything, it must mean a return to normality. That still seems some way off.

This is the reason senior Labour figures are calling for the whole peace process to be slowed down: Labour MPs, including Frank Field and Henry Barnes, the vice-chair of Labour's Northern Ireland committee, have tabled a Commons motion arguing that prisoner release cannot continue while the organisations of which the prisoners are members continue to maim and disfigure people. Coming from members of a party historically sympathetic to Irish nationalism, this should serve as a warning to Sinn Féin and the IRA that the patience of the British Government and public is wearing thin.

Mo Mowlam and Tony Blair do not have many cards left to play, since there is so little ground left to give in the political process. Unionists will veto Sinn Féin's membership of any Northern Ireland Executive without the decommissioning of arms; the Government can make no more concessions in that direction. The only inducement they have left is the release of prisoners.

Prisoner release should be slowed, to show that the Government still has some bargaining power. Further releases should also be tied to decommissioning, for the process will collapse anyway without some measure of decommissioning. This is a dangerous gamble - it may provoke a violent response from the paramilitaries - but it is the only leverage the Government now has. Citizens living on the British mainland, relieved that they no longer live in fear of some new atrocity, should remember that many of their fellow citizens in Northern Ireland daily face the reality of intimidation. That is unacceptable; if the Government ignores it, its negligence will not be forgotten.



Our moral duty to the Caribbean nations

ALMOST UNNOTICED, a major trade war is threatening to break out between Europe and the US. Because the dispute concerns the humble banana, it seems difficult to take the subject seriously; media coverage of impending American sanctions has been sparse, to say the least. This is misguided in the extreme.

The imposition of \$520m (£324m) worth of tariffs on European goods is no laughing matter. The arbitrary rag-bag of goods covered by the American action includes cashmere - threatening hundreds of jobs in Scotland - and a range of textiles, foodstuffs and other consumer goods. Worse, sanctions could threaten an all-out trade war, in which Britain has much to lose.

Free trade is in everyone's interests in the long run. But

Europe's efforts to secure a few years' exemption for their former colonies in the Caribbean are justified. Some islands are totally dependent on this one trade. If protection were to be removed immediately, the economy of such islands - St Lucia, for example - would be destroyed. Europe has a moral duty, having created the banana plantations, to make sure that Caribbean do not pay for the decisions we imposed upon them in the past. At the same time, money should be provided to allow diversification into other industries, such as tourism. Some islands, such as Barbados, have already embarked on this process. There is no reason why other islands cannot follow suit.

As to our mutual obligations to the rules of the World Trade Organisation, America's threatened sanctions are precipitate. They bring to mind its heavy-handed approach to trade with Cuba in 1996 and 1997. Then, the US attempted to punish European companies' American subsidiaries if they traded with Cuba, criminalising those breaking no law in their own country, and causing months of wrangling.

The Americans may be bluffing. The EU has made a series of concessions in an attempt to head off sanctions; the World Trade Organisation's Disputes Settlement Body has not yet ruled on the conflicting claims for that package, making the legal status of sanctions questionable, to say the least. Europe stood its ground over Cuba, securing a last-minute deal. It must stand up to the Americans again, to secure an acceptable compromise.

A harsh lesson

JAPANESE SCHOOLDAYS are so unrelentingly repressive that they are known as "the grey years". Yet now some schools are degenerating into chaos. It is startling. We knew that over-concentration on the "basics" could stifle the development of imaginative human capital. Now we find that harsh discipline can't keep children well behaved. The warning from Japan about rigidity is timely and potent.

There is a way to make parental choice a reality for everyone

FORGET DNA. Proof of our close links to the insecure, competitive, skull-smashing troglodytes of the Ice Age is nowhere more evident in modern society than when we buy and sell our houses, or choose our children's schools. The trust and restraint that characterise most social transactions disappear, and are replaced by a dynamic selfishness. Even sweeties who adopt Sudanese orphans and are paragons of recycling turn into monsters when there's a chance of an extra five grand on the house sale or when junior can't get into that little school with the great reputation.

Over the weekend, readers of *The Mail on Sunday* were diverted by a gigantic splash headlined "Parents Fury Over Blair's School Place Row". The mummies and daddies in question were brassed off because 11 kids, all of them pupils in a local Catholic Sacred Heart primary school, had failed to get places in the Sacred Heart comprehensive school 500 yards or so away, in Hammer-smith, west London. But the Blair's daughter, Kathryn (based, of course, in Westminster) had been admitted.

Over other issues the parents who allowed themselves to be interviewed by *The Mail on Sunday* might have used more discretion before sounding off against the admission of one small girl to the Sacred Heart. But this was caveperson stuff. A Mrs Maria Mavrokefalos (which I think is Greek for "big brain") demanded: "What right has Tony Blair to get his daughter into our school?" And a Linda Gray asserted that, "It's simple - the Blair's have taken somebody's place."

Let's deal with rights in a moment. But first there's this issue of stolen places. Now, admittedly arithmetic is not my strong point, but I cannot see how wee Kathryn has managed to keep out all 11 of the rejected Sacred Hearters. There must be at least another 10 carpet-bagging pre-teens, so who are they? For some reason we are not told. Aware, however, that the issue must - mathematically - go beyond the youngest Blair, *The Mail on Sunday* reaches for the word "embarrassment" (journalists for "no actual sin has been committed, but we want to run the story anyway") and then, more hopefully, for "contradictions in Labour's policy".

And it's true that there is an issue here; but it is by no means a Labour issue. Mr Blunkett's School Standards and Framework Act, which has recently become law, is primarily an attempt to bring some kind of order to an area - schools admissions policies - that has become increasingly chaotic and unsatisfactory. The previous government had become hopelessly entangled in the contradiction between increased selection (which it favoured) and the diametrically opposite, parental choice (which it also favoured). Sitting in the middle were Local Education Authorities, obliged somehow to square these circles.

Theoretically what Mr Blunkett has done is to come down on the side of choice over selection. So LEAs are required "to make arrangements enabling the parents of children living in their area to express a preference as to the school at which they wish their child to be educated", and are

also, along with school governors, placed under a duty "to comply with any preference [so] expressed", with certain exceptions. So, one up to Mrs Mavrokefalos?

Not really. A further clause "applies the duty to comply with parental preference... by parents living outside the LEA's administrative area". This is in fact pretty sensible. For many people the local school may well be outside their LEA boundaries.

But lying athwart any direct path to unconstrained parental choice are two deep chasms. The first is the desire to prevent ghettoisation (sorry!), by attempting to ration schools' intake of children according to ability. So the Act permits selection only "providing those arrangements are designed to secure that (a) pupils... are representative of the

full spread of ability... and (b) that no level of ability is substantially over-represented or under-represented". In addition, specialist schools are permitted to select up to 10 per cent of incoming pupils on the basis of "aptitude" in the specialism, but not according to ability.

The second, and much greater chasm, is the fact that lots of parents choose the same schools, and these schools aren't big enough to accommodate all would-be pupils. Since no one has found a magic way to grow popular schools, or to shrink unpopular ones, there has to be some form of rationing. Mr Blunkett's Act does not really tell us how, or by whom, this feat is to be accomplished.

Let us return to the Sacred Heart. The surge of popularity that has led to an increase in applications over places surely follows a recent Ofsted report that the High School was "very good". Word gets around. Parents in these Woodheadian days know that "very good" for a girl's school means guaranteed qualifications, not many drugs and no pregnancies.

I imagine that West London is suddenly full of lapsed Catholics with 11-year-old daughters, who have just rediscovered their faith. A few years ago, when our family was playing the game of "what school?", I found myself at a local C of E primary telling a headmistress how even a semi-Jewish atheist could have a strong respect for the religious traditions of others, while my partner (once Welsh chapel) tried to recall whether John the Baptist came before or after Christ.

Our problem was that the popular

local primaries had unofficial "catchment areas" that took in about 10 houses, and the unpopular ones were, er, unpopular. So we used our wiles to suggest the contribution that we might make to the communal life of the school. We considered moving into one of the 10 houses. Had we been even more unscrupulous we might have joined those who fraudulently rent a postal address very close to the school of choice.

Or we could at that point have taken flight, as so many friends did, to the private sector. This is Mrs Mavrokefalos again, on Tony Blair: "He can afford to go to private school." And she went on: "He's even taken away my daughter's right to an assisted place." Yes, well. That sounds a bit like an assisted quote to me. And there never was such a thing as a "right to an assisted place".

There is no big, happy solution here. While some schools are seen to be better than others, parents will be in competition for places. As information about school performance is disseminated, this competition is likely to become more intense, not less. And those with money, eloquence or really convincing social problems will use their assets to achieve the best results for their children.

There is, therefore, only one substantial strategy for alleviating that parental angst, and protecting us all from sporadic outbreaks of Mavrokefalitis. It's to make all schools better. So that when little Zoé, Chloe, Seth and Josh fail to get into St Wondertul's, they still have Prettygood High to fall back on.



DAVID AARONOVITCH
Those with money or eloquence will use their assets to achieve the best results for their children

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
World comment on allegations of corruption in the International Olympic Committee

THIS AFFAIR will enable us to return to the controllable organisations of the Olympics. We must avoid economics taking the upper hand and dictating its law to the organisational committees. The IOC must also agree to becoming somewhat more condensed: 115 members is too much. 25 or 30 would be far more easy to regulate. The IOC is representative of society but not representative of sport.

Le Monde, France

IT is appropriate that delegates be treated to a high standard of accommodation and dining and receive some gifts. When the giving of gifts turns into corruption can be a matter of degree, but is principally a matter of transparency. The test is whether those giving or receiving would want it publicly known. The possibility that it

might become public is a deterrent, which is why the media mentality is so essential.

Sydney Morning Herald, Australia

THE EUROPEAN press has just begun investigating IOC head Juan Antonio Samaranch and some of his associates, including some rogish characters who would never make it to the cover of a Wheaties box. Stay tuned, sports fans.

The Washington Post, US

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"My career must have slipped - this is the first time I've been available to pick up an award"

Michael Caine, British actor

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is very important that you do it."

Mahatma Gandhi, Indian sage

Home Insurance, who offers you more choice



CGU Direct offers you three levels of comprehensive cover for contents and two for buildings, so that your home insurance best suits your needs. What's more, we offer up to 30% no claims discount on contents insurance and you can choose easy, interest free monthly payments.

CGU Direct

0800 121 004
Quote ref: PRS46

Open 7 days a week. www.cgu-direct.co.uk
Calls may be monitored or recorded for your protection.
*Full written details on request.

Motor Insurance: 0800 121 000
Travel Insurance: 0800 121 007

Buildings and Contents: 0800 121 004
Mortgage Payment Protection: 0800 121 008

Let's privatise the Olympics



HAMISH MCRAE

The most serious charge against the IOC is not one of corruption – it is one of incompetence

IT IS a remarkable contrast. The phrase "Olympic Games" carries great clout as a global brand symbolising human achievement and excellence. Yet a fair proportion of the people who run them have been revealed to be crooks, while a fair proportion of the participants have been revealed to be druggies. Something is up.

What has happened is much the same story that has taken place in other sports, except that the scale seems to be, er, more Olympian. All sports are in the process of transforming themselves from co-operative or charitable organisations into businesses. All sport is gradually being transformed into a branch of the entertainment industry. However the ethical and auditing standards under which most businesses have been forced to operate over the years are only gradually being extended to sport. The business aspects of sport are too new to have acquired the standard business disciplines. Company directors who accept bribes and are caught go to jail – though maybe not for as long as they should. Members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) can't even see what is wrong with trousering the odd brown envelope.

For those of us whose main experience of sport has been going sking on holiday or (briefly and unsuccessfully) club rugby, the idea that sport should be a business like any other is still a bit jarring. Like any other? Well, yes – all businesses are different and the gap between, say, Formula One and one of the big Hollywood studios feels narrower than that between Microsoft and its neighbour in Seattle. Boeing. The first two create a product you sit and watch as entertainment, while the output of the other two is quite different.

The Olympics is particularly interesting in business terms because it is one of the big three global TV sports events. It commands the largest single television audience for a sports event, larger even than football's World Cup. However since the Olympics and the World Cup take place only every four years, the highest television audience calculated on an annual basis is that of Formula One.



The respected British hurdler Jon Ridgeon at the centennial Olympiad in Atlanta, Georgia in 1996

Mike Powell/Allsport

Not only is the audience big; it is broad. Formula One and the World Cup are great at providing advertisers with large numbers of relatively high-spending young men, always a difficult group to reach. They do not, however, offer much access to Americans, because neither is established in the States. Incidentally, the position of Britain as home of the world's most valuable sports club, Manchester United, and also of Formula One, gives us a comparative advantage in this branch of the market which we ought to be able to exploit further.

The Olympics, on the other hand, is global, giving access not just to the US but also, crucially, to China. If you are a global business, like Visa, then you are prepared to pay an enormous amount to flood the event with your symbols. You could laboriously piece together a global campaign which gave you similar exposure, but with the Olympics you get it with one shot.

So there is a lot of money swishing around. It is not enormous by conventional commercial standards. It is hard to put a value on the Olympic brand, partly because it has not been developed commercially and partly because it is not clear quite what the IOC would own

were it reconstituted as a commercial entity.

The closest comparison would be Formula One, which is owned by Bernie Ecclestone. When it looked as though Formula One would be floated there was talk of it being worth about £2 to £3 billion. I would expect the Olympics to be bigger, largely because there must be ways in which it could be developed from a four-yearly event into something that produced subsidiary products annually. But even if it were worth £3 billion that would make it about the same size as a successful chain store: bigger than Next but smaller than Debenhams, a decent size, but by comparison to the power of the global brand, not enormous.

The Olympic committee, however, is not the only beneficiary of a global brand name. A lot of value goes to the host cities, assuming that they organise themselves on the Los Angeles or Atlanta models – where they took existing facilities and built ones that could be used afterwards. The alternative grand schemes as in Barcelona and, most disastrously, Montreal – have piled debts on the poor taxpayers for a generation. The Australians reckon that next year's Sydney Olympics will be worth about £4bn

to the country's economy. Building and tourism are the two industries that benefit most.

Faced with numbers like that, the odd hit of lavish entertainment for a susceptible IOC member might seem pretty small beer. And if one of these individuals wants to take his hung in the form of cosmetic surgery on the bags under his eyes (as apparently happened in the Salt Lake City bid), so be it. Not only do these dreadful people accept bribes, but they have a seriously unattractive taste in them too.

The most serious charge against the IOC is surely not one of corruption, though that is serious enough to warrant far more than the half-dozen resignations that seem to be on the cards at the moment. It is one of incompetence.

Any business the main asset of which is a brand has to do two things. First, it must protect the credibility, the honour if you like, of that brand. You have to be squeaky clean. Here the record has over the years been dreadful. Quite aside from the corruption of members of the committee there has been the corruption of the Olympic ideal.

The most certain way of damaging a sports brand is to have it associated with drugs. Most

sensible athletes know this. Those tainted by drug accusations – even those not actually caught – have found that sponsorship money dries up. Not all athletes are sensible. That is understandable. What is incomprehensible is that the IOC has not realised the potential damage to the one thing it controls, the Olympic brand, from not adopting an aggressive anti-drug stance.

It should, for example, retrospectively present medals to all those athletes cheated out of them by people subsequently shown to have been drug users. And the drug users should be stripped of their medals and the medal tables reconstructed. Were this to have been done years ago, a number of athletes would not have had their health ruined and – commercial point – the value of the television contract for the Olympics would be appreciably higher.

That leads to the second thing that owners of brand assets must do: add value. Take Coca-Cola. It is not a particularly marvellous product: in most blind tests people seem to prefer Pepsi. But despite the odd hiccup (most famously when Coca-Cola changed the formula) it has been wonderfully creative at developing the brand.

The Olympics are a wonderful brand, but the organisers have not taken it and developed it. They might like to look at Manchester United, which is almost certainly the most successful club in the world at building a business that has geared up the basic product into an international business.

The tragedy of international athletics is that this has not happened. A driven, competent, professional and, above all, clean IOC could do an enormous amount to raise the quality of life of bumankind. No, I don't mean a global campaign to get us to take more exercise. I mean using the money the big money, that could be available to encourage athletically talented people everywhere in the world to develop themselves through sport.

All that is needed are the normal commercial and ethical standards that any decent-sized multinational should command. The present structure is clearly useless. This is not just a people problem, though it is certainly that. It is a structural problem, too. Privatising the IOC, put in professional management and have the shares owned by a trust dedicated to the Olympic ideal... why not?

RIGHT OF REPLY

JONATHAN REGGLER



A member of the British Medical Association's general practitioner committee responds to a leader on Viagra

A LEADER in *The Independent* of 23 January assumes that the British Medical Association (BMA) sees the conflict with the Government over Viagra as an issue of clinical freedom and uses this as an opportunity to do a bit of doctor bashing. It was particularly galling to be told that the BMA should be engaged in persuasive arguments "that National Health Service spending as a whole is too low". The BMA has been saying this for years and has published endless figures to prove it. Why successive governments have not found the arguments persuasive is a question that begs an answer.

The BMA's general practitioner committee of which I am a member rejected the guidelines of Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, and advised GPs to prescribe Viagra to those in need for two reasons. Firstly, NHS regulations ruling GPs' lives explicitly require us to prescribe those drugs that our patients need. Only certain drugs are banned, and Viagra is not yet one of them. Minor infringements of these regulations can lead to severe punishments, but Mr Dobson wants us to ignore the regulations when it suits him.

Secondly, whilst most GPs accept that rationing in the NHS is necessary, it should be fair and logical. Mr Dobson, had two ethically acceptable choices. Viagra for all of those in need or Viagra for no one. To give Viagra on the NHS only to those made impotent by a narrow range of causes and to deny it to all other impotent men is indeed, to use the words of the BMA, "cruel and unethical".

On the scent of flower power

"IF ANYTHING was worth bankrupting yourself for, tulips were," writes Anna Pavord. She will not have lost a penny on this six-year venture, which has already attracted more column inches than most gardening books, as well as serialisation on Radio 4. However, *The Tulip* is not a gardening book in the conventional sense, nor is it a monograph. But it is definitely a work of great scholarship, tracing the history of the plant with a remarkably colourful past.

Before you embark on *The Tulip*, I suggest you find a comfortable armchair and put a seriously large cushion on your lap, or your arms will tire well before your curiosity. There



TUESDAY BOOK

THE TULIP
BY ANNA PAVORD, BLOOMSBURY, £30

is a wonderful illustration on virtually every other page, so it takes until page 279 before you get to the invaluable index of varieties. Pavord writes lyrically about each species, from *Tulipa acuminata*, "with its crazy, very tall, thin bud opening to creamy flowers sometimes streaked and flecked with red", to *T. zenaidae*,

with yellow flowers that are "elegantly waisted, the top third of the flower flapping outwards".

She goes on to describe, in a way any sports writer would envy the cultivators – tulips bred for show and classified into various divisions, like football stars. Starting with Abu Hassan, which is a "dark mahogany-red with an edge of gold around the top half of the petals", she continues to 'Zwanenburg', which is "a pure white with plum-coloured stamens".

Before Pavord tantalises us with the range of tulips available today, she takes the reader through the plant's origins, moving from its mountain habitats in the East to its pride of place in the sultan's palaces. She explains how the name came about through a wonderful misunderstanding. The Flemish ambassador to the court of Suleyman the Magnificent, in 16th century Constantinople, claimed the honour of introducing the tulip to Europe. He also managed to confuse his interpreter's description of the flower, which looks like a turban ("tulband" in Turkish), with the name of the flower itself, which the Turks called "kule".

The plot thickens as we follow the fame and fortune of the tulip through northern Europe to Britain. Pavord speculates that, if England had not been busy with a civil war in the mid-17th century, we, too, might have been caught up in the financial speculation that spread through Holland. There bulbs were traded in much the same way as the stock market deals in commodities, fuelled by what would be

seen today as clever marketing. It takes up to seven years for tulip seed to mature into a bulb of flowering size. Bulbs were often sold as they lay buried in the ground, their potential unknown. Yet at the height of this trading, a single tulip might fetch as much as an Amsterdam town house.

Prized varieties were given elaborate names, such as the famous 'Semper Augustus', while the most handsome flowers were painted by the greatest Dutch artists as if they had been society hostesses. This celebrity status added to the mystique of the tulip, as did its unapproachable secret: why certain plants should "break" and then produce such exciting colour combinations. Not until 1928 was it discovered that these colour breaks were caused by a virus that weakened the plants. However, even after the financial crash that marked the end of tulip mania, the Dutch refused to give up on tulips. The rich alluvial soil around Haarlem was soon given over to increased production, which continues to this day.

In 19th century Britain and Ireland, the tulip was no longer the plaything of the rich but a plant that could be enjoyed by anyone who wished to join their local floral society. These societies were devoted to the culture of one plant and their meetings took place in inns. There were magazines that fed the florist's interest, and a great rivalry developed between the north and south of Britain over the perfect form of the florist's tulip. Interestingly, the demise of the floral societies coincided with football's first FA Cup final, played in 1872. Today, only the Wakefield and the North of England Tulip Society remains.

While tulips seemed to be going out of fashion in early 20th century Britain, the Dutch seized the moment by launching a new breed called Darwins, named with the permission of Charles

Darwin's son. They started a new tulip invasion, and the Dutch now export at least 2 billion tulips a year.

Even though her book covers more ground than one might consider possible, Pavord still seems like a detective who is not quite sure if she has solved all the tulip's mysteries. If she has not got the tulip out of her system, she has certainly succeeded in spreading her passion for the plant.

ROSIE ATKINS

The reviewer is the editor of *Gardens Illustrated*



Tulips from the 'Florilegium' of Pieter van Kousenhoorn, made in the first half of the 17th century

LET OUR PENS MAKE YOUR MARK

Our classic range of pens can now be personalised with your company name.

Using the universally recognised writing instruments of Parker, Paper Mate and Waterman will add weight and style to your advertising and corporate gift schemes. What's more you can buy them all direct from the manufacturer Parker Business to Business.

Leaving a lasting impression with your clients and customers could not be easier.

For our Free Brochure packed with creative ideas phone

01273 632 512

WATERMAN • PARKER • PAPER MATE

6/OBITUARIES

Leslie French

DESPITE A remarkably varied career over nearly three-quarters of a century during which he appeared in everything from musical revue and pantomime, through Shakespeare, Milton and Eliot and a final trenchant cameo on television in Dennis Potter's *The Singing Detective* (1988), Leslie French (like his fellow vertically-challenged and similarly farouche contemporary Richard Goolden, the perennial Mole of *Toad of Toad Hall*) is fated always to be associated primarily with one particular role.

But then his Ariel, first tackled during an *annus mirabilis* at the Old Vic in a 1930 *Tempest* to John Gielgud's first Prospero, a memorable performance in itself, also received a kind of immortality often denied to much starker actors. The performances of Gielgud and French, the talk of London at the time, inspired Eric Gill's carving of Prospero with his staff towering over Ariel above the entrance to the then brand new Broadcasting House in Portland Place (and Ariel remains the title of the BBC house magazine).

All of French's early background and training informed and nourished his Ariel (which he played on numerous occasions during his career) and other memorable performances of Shakespeare's elementals and clowns as well as his equally striking *Attendant Spirit* in several revivals of Milton's *Comus* at the Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park, of which he became a mainstay at the height of his career.

He was born in Bromley in 1906. His education in the London School of Choristers developed a natural musical talent and he was incurably stage-struck even before his first appearance as a boy actor in a 1914 Christmas show at the Little Theatre. He joined the touring Ben Greet Company as soon as he could leave school (aged 14), basically as a general dogbody and prompter, and those apprentice years with Greet fuelled his passion for Shakespeare.

His singing ability and physical grace (he was a first-rate dancer and a superb skater well into old age) landed him an early West End job in 1929 at the Hippodrome, understudying Bobby Howes as the lovelorn hero of Vivian Ellis's musical *Mr Cinders*, taking over the title role and its hit song "Spread a Little Happiness" on the subsequent regional tour.

Then in 1930 he joined the Old Vic at the beginning of a golden period in its history. After a mutually wary interview, Lilian Baylis had grudgingly agreed a salary of £20 a week for John Gielgud, then an emergent West End star, to join the company. With a run of parts including his first attempts at Hamlet, Lear, Prospero and Macbeth (as well as Anthony, Malvolio and Richard II), Gielgud made the Waterloo Road a vital address for classically-minded younger actors and both Ralph Richardson and Laurence Olivier

soon followed him south of the river. French's Old Vic roles included Puck in *Henry IV, Part 1* (the first production to see Gielgud and Richardson share the same stage), Eros in *Antony and Cleopatra*, the Fool in *Lear* and his Ariel.

Under the Old Vic's director Harcourt Williams, an enthusiastic vegetarian dispensing Bemax and occasional inspiration in equal measure, *The Tempest* (much influenced by directorial input from Gielgud, who was particularly helpful to Richardson in finding his feet as Caliban) was a revelation, not least because of featuring the first male Ariel for a century.

Haunting in the songs, French also found a compelling and deeply touching tension between the fey sprite and the dispenser of practical magic, creating a vulnerably androgynous figure torn between devotion to his master and his yearning to be free. The performance created an additional frisson through French's athletic body-

Few actors have matched his record in Shakespeare's elementals and zanies, or invested them with such a potent blend of mischief and otherworldliness

language, his supple body naked except for a minute loincloth (remarkably daring for the English stage in 1930).

After his Old Vic seasons French appeared under Gielgud's direction in one of the 1930s most tantalising near-misses when Rodney Ackland's *Strange Orchestra* (St Martin's, 1932) received a West End production after a previous try-out at the Embassy Theatre. In this oddity of a mood-piece, set against a louche inter-war Bohemian London in a Bloomsbury flat peopled by lodgers including the lost and the criminal, French played Jimmie, a highly-strung young man intensely involved with fellow-lodger Laura, living just on the edge of things, sensitive and drifting.

Their joint suicide bid galvanised the latter sections of a strange but always absorbing play which despite mainly positive notices (including a perceptive one from James Agate) never caught on at the box-office. The production had not been helped by Mrs Patrick Campbell, long considered unemployable, living up to her reputation as a sinking ship firing on



French as Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with Mini Theilade, at the Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park in 1934. He last performed the role of Puck there in 1951

its rescuers. Gielgud risked casting her as Vera, the feckless but generous-spirited landlady at the centre of the play, but after rehearsing gloriously for a fortnight and promising to deliver a magnificent comeback, she flounced out of the production, claiming to understand neither the play nor her characters ("She's not quite a lady, is she? Who are all these people? Does Gladys Cooper know them?"). French, however, emerged extremely well from this *succès d'estime*.

Shortly afterwards, he worked for the first time at the Open Air Theatre in Regent's Park. His first season was in 1933 and he last worked there in 1958, in somewhat unlikely but extremely successful tandem with the mighty and titan-voiced Robert Atkins, poles apart physically and temperamentally from the slight and urban figure of French. Over those years he often played Ariel and Puck (the latter performance well up to the standard of his Ariel, although his one attempt at Bottom was an experiment that did not come off, as well as a Mercutio of quicksilver wit and

panache. Sylvius, Costard, Pisanio, Grumio and a Feste steeped in self-mocking *accidie*).

Few actors have matched his record in Shakespeare's elementals and zanies; even fewer have managed to invest so many of them with such a potent blend of mischief and otherworldliness. He also directed several times at the Park (*The Taming of the Shrew* and *As You Like It* were especially successful, and his subsequent directorial career took him on many occasions to South Africa. He helped establish the open air Maynardville Theatre in Cape Town, where the productions had multi-racial casts and audiences; as well as playing familiar roles such as Puck and Touchstone, he was also unexpectedly successful as Shylock.

Really meaty stage roles were thinner on the ground at home in his later years (sadly he never had an opportunity to play a part in which he would have been perfectly cast – the mysterious Loo in J.M. Barrie's *Dear Brutus*), but he brought leibally silky precision to Dr Warburton in T.S. Eliot's *The Family Reunion* at Guildford (1968) and in Robin

Phillips's starry revival of Christopher Fry's *The Lady's not for Burning* in 1973; he adapted so well so quickly to his first experience of the difficult Chichester hexagonal stage (years of Regent's Park experience coming in useful here) that Richard Chamberlain, Anna Calder-Marshall and even that most lacerous of supporting actors, Harold Innocent, had to look extremely sharp whenever French, in the minor but in his hands tellingly rewarding part of the Chaplain, was on stage.

He had more luck with television work as theatre opportunities dwindled, perhaps most memorably in a BBC Classic Serial of Jane Austen's *Emma* in which his unsuited but slyly unsentimental reading of the solipsistic Mr Woodhouse not only made the valetudinarian old monster paradoxically sympathetic, but also effortlessly stole the production away from every other actor in it.

ALAN STRACHAN

Leslie Richard French, actor and director: born Bromley, Kent 23 April 1904; died Ewell, Surrey 21 January 1999.

Lt-Col Tony Simonds

TONY SIMONDS played an important part behind the scenes in the Second World War in the Near Eastern theatre.

His had long been a leading family in Berkshire – the Reading brewers were his cousins and he was fond of saying, "There is no such thing as bad beer". From school at Wellington he went to farm in north Devon and after service as a Territorial was commissioned into the Royal Berkshire Regiment in 1931. By 1936 he was serving on the intelligence staff in Palestine, then a British mandate. He caught the attention of the Commander-in-Chief, General (later Earl) Wavell, who already thought another world war likely. If it should break out he earmarked three officers for special duty: Orde Wingate, who was operating the Special Night Squads in co-operation with militant Jews; Dudley Clarke, like Wingate a gunner; and Simonds. Simonds was able to provide Wingate with information and targets, and was one of the few officers with whom that notoriously awkward character was able to get on.

Simonds read T.E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* when it was published in 1935 and amused himself on a long leave by riding several of Lawrence's camel rides; from which he emerged with admiration for the man, but the certainty that the book was as much novel as solid history.

In the autumn of 1940 Simonds and Wingate worked together to prepare a supplementary invasion of Abyssinia (as Ethiopia was then called), from the west, based on Khartoum and mounted on camels; they supplemented the more formal invasion forces attacking from the north and the south-east. They were controlled by a staff in Cairo called MO4, under whom Lawrence also had once worked. MO4 was absorbed into the Special Operations Executive (SOE), the secret service for subverting and sabotaging the axis war effort.

Wingate named his expedition Gideon Force. It carried with it a political trump, the exiled emperor Haile Selassie, whom it helped to replace on his throne in Addis Ababa. Simonds operated independently on its left wing, with some startling guerrilla successes; bluffing his way past superior Italian forces who were bewildered by his hit-and-run tactics and his ingenuity at creating makeshift weapons.

SOE learned important lessons from what happened to Gideon Force, whose work pre-figured several of SOE's attempts to raise underground armies in occupied Europe and to supply them by air. Lectures on how successful the largely African force had been were soon suspended after complaints from the South African government, which was uneasy at the spreading of stories about the defeat of white men by black.

Simonds was next tasked, on his recovery from six months' hard living in the East African bush, with the forming of SOE's section for work in Greece; from which he was called away in the autumn of 1941 to form N Section of A Force: phrases that meant nothing to a chance hearer. A Force was Dudley Clarke's deception service, which worked with enormous success to confuse the enemy; its N

Section provided some cover for it by training troops of all arms in the methods of escape and evasion. This was part of MIB, the escape service.

Moreover, Simonds set himself to organise escape lines across occupied Eastern Europe. Here he had invaluable help from friends he had made while helping the special night squads. He came to an understanding with the Jewish Agency; they offered him facilities in his field, on the understanding that for every escapee the force brought out a Jew could come as well. He thus assisted over 3,000 Allied escaped prisoners of war and shot down airmen to get back. Several of the agents he sent forward into Hungary and Romania to help form these lines fell into the hands of hostile police and came to horrible ends; Hannah Szenes the poet among them. Others were more fortunate and survived; long after the war Simonds was warmly welcomed whenever he visited Israel.

He also had agents operating in small boats across the Aegean, based in a cove at Çesme near Smyrna to which the local Turkish authorities were persuaded to shut their eyes. These parties too helped swell the numbers of escapees; and when the Allies moved into Italy Simonds coasted with a fleet of small boats cutting out parties of escapees who managed to get down to the shore. He was seven times mentioned in despatches but his habit of speaking his mind did not endear him to higher authorities and has only British decoration was an OBE. (Wingate is said to have put him in for a DSO at the end of the Abyssinia campaign; at that stage in the war a recommendation from Wingate was itself a black mark.)

When the war was over he helped investigate some claims of persecution (then endemic in the Near East), spent a year at the infant Middle East centre for Arab Studies, and was for four years deputy commander of the military mission to Saudi Arabia. A year as assistant military attaché in Cairo convinced him it was time he retired; and in 1952 he went to Cyprus to grow flowers for a living.

He became one of the leaders of the Ancient Britons, a friendly-archaeologist nicknamed the British residents who stayed in Cyprus after it became independent; but he had bad luck. When the Turks invaded in 1974 they napalmed his house; he lost all his furniture, silver and papers. He rewrote a book he had just finished; that too was destroyed in a fire. He rewrote his memoirs for a third time; those, more fortunately, are deposited in the Imperial War Museum.

Tony Simonds was a large, burly, handsome man with a cheerful outgoing manner, always direct in speech and a stout friend to those he trusted. He fell ill and returned to England last autumn to die.

M. R. D. FOOTE

Anthony Charles Simonds, guerrilla leader and escape line organiser: born Arborfield, Berkshire 21 November 1909; MSE 1938, OBE 1943; married 1944 Eileen Llewellyn Jones (two daughters; marriage dissolved 1969); 1978 Barbara Ayre; died Stevenage, Hertfordshire 7 January 1999.

Professor Roger Walker

ROGER WALKER was one of Hispanism's most distinguished medievalists, and one of the academic community's most able and respected administrators.

His research in Spanish medieval studies focused on the epic, the romance and hagiography, his publications including a large number of articles on the *Poema de mio Cid*, a book on *El Libro del Cavallero Zifor*, and editions of *El Cavallero Plagidos* and the *Historia de Santa Maria Egipcíaca*. Here his work was characterised by a common-sense approach and the ruthless demolition of some of the more nationalistic brands of medieval scholarship previously rife, and still not entirely dead, in Spain.

One thinks particularly of his pragmatic view of the Cid as bourgeois hero, and of his brilliant inaugural lecture insisting that many of the anomalies of Spanish medieval literature can be explained by seven centuries of Arab cultural presence in the peninsula; a presence which Hispanists in Spain have, until recently, consistently downgraded, if not ignored.

Walker's concern with meticulous scholarship led him to study Arabic in order to acquire first-hand knowledge of Spain's Islamic heritage. His broad knowledge of the European medieval literary tradition, particularly that of France and Portugal, was also evident in much of his work.

He co-authored Cassell's compact *Spanish-English, English-Spanish Dictionary* (1969), edited Spanish hagiographical texts, and wrote about a range of Spanish epic and lyric literature. His other research



The Cid as bourgeois hero

specialism was 16th- and 17th-century Portuguese literature, particularly the work of Camões (he contributed to collections on Camões and wrote various articles). He was thus the perfect person to be chosen to catalogue the papers, held in Valence House Museum in Dagenham, of Sir Richard Fanshawe: man of letters and ambassador to Spain and Portugal in the 17th century.

This labour, undertaken in collaboration with the historian W.H. Liddell of Birkbeck College, occupied the last years of his life. Although he was frustrated in his attempt to complete this work in the short span of time he knew was left to him, with characteristic professionalism he succeeded in leaving it in a sufficiently advanced state for the work to be completed after his death.

Born in Huddersfield, Roger

Walker incarnated all the positive features of the Yorkshireman stereotype: down to earth, sensible, straight-talking, and above all jovial and a lover of the good things in life. After a distinguished student track record at Manchester University (where he read French and Spanish), he was appointed to an Assistant Lectureship at Bristol University at the age of 23. Two years later in 1963 he was appointed Lecturer in Spanish at Birkbeck College, London University, to which he devoted the rest of his working life, as Reader from 1972. Professor of Spanish Medieval Studies from 1980 and, most notably, as Vice-Master from 1988 to 1993.

To many, Walker will be remembered primarily for his clear thinking and fair-mindedness as an administrator: qualities that made him a popular choice as first Head of the Centre for Language and Literature at Birkbeck in 1987, and a year later for the post of Vice-Master. In both posts, he secured universal respect, and his even-handed but no-nonsense approach allowed him to implement new structures without making enemies; a rare achievement. He also served on numerous London University committees, including its Academic Council and Senate. His administrative talents were recognised on a national level through his work for the Modern Humanities Research Association, on whose committee he served continuously since 1974. He became Hispanic Editor of the *Modern Language Review* in 1980, serving as its General Editor from 1985 to 1993.

Roger Michael Walker, Hispanist: born Huddersfield, Yorkshire 25 July 1935; Assistant Lecturer, Bristol University 1961-63; Lecturer, Birkbeck College, London University 1963-72; Reader 1972-80; Professor of Spanish Medieval Studies 1980-93; Vice-Master 1988-93; married 1960 Patricia Eccles (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1980); died Colchester, Essex 11 January 1999.

As editor of the *MHRA Style Book*, the guide to authorial style and presentation most widely used in the UK, he left his mark on scholarship in all fields of the Humanities. Elected a Life Member of MHRA in 1994, he was also a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries (since 1983) and of the Royal Historical Society (since 1994), and served as President of the British branch of the Société Rencoevals (1988-91) and of the London Medieval Society (1988-92).

His major professional and personal achievement was perhaps as a member of the Spanish panel for the first Research Selectivity Exercise in 1989, chair of the Research Assessment Exercise panel for French, Spanish, Russian and European Studies in 1992, and chair of the RAE panel for Spanish in 1995. Thanks to his reputation for fair-mindedness and good sense, the results of these exercises were received by his colleagues in the field of Hispanism with a notable lack of acrimony, confirming the trust and respect with which he was regarded by the profession in an age of increasing competitiveness.

JO LABANYI

Winifred Morgan was the only British nurse to be awarded the Star of Ethiopia by Emperor Haile Selassie for her work in Africa. She had a distinguished nursing career in teaching hospitals in London, Glasgow and Manchester and with the World Health Organisation and the Red Cross.

Born in 1914, she was determined as a child to be a nurse, although there was no nursing tradition in her family – her father, a chauffeur, set up his own taxi business. Both parents died when Winifred was 11 and her sister seven. Thereafter the sisters were brought up separately. Winifred by an aunt and uncle in London, and it may have been the disciplinarian aunt which produced in Winifred Morgan the disciplinarian attitude of the senior nurse.

As a girl Morgan worked hard towards her goal, won a scholarship to Queen Anne's School, Caversham, and when she left trained as a nurse at King's College Hospital, London, then as a midwife at Sussex Maternity Hospital, Brighton. She then returned to King's, which she always referred to with a fierce pride. This was not always appreciated by colleagues when she moved on to Scotland and the north of England.

At King's she became involved in nurse education and was in charge of the preliminary training school, something then new in nurse education. In 1949 she went to Edinburgh as sister tutor at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children but left after a year "for domestic reasons". The following year she was appointed principal sister tutor at the General Hospital, Jersey, to reorganise the nursing school and establish the block system in nurse education. She left to take a course in nursing administration and had a brief period in management as an assistant matron at Guy's Hospital, in London.

Her next post was a pioneering one in nursing education, as director of the experimental training course at Glasgow Royal Infirmary, introduced by the matron, E.G. Manners. It was a brave task for an outsider from England to undertake. Nurses in training were to be real students and not part of the hospital staff, although they worked on the wards. There they had clinical supervision from tutors. If they had been on night duty they did not have to wake up by day to attend lectures. They were prepared for the state examination in two years instead of the usual three and then had a third year of practical experience before state registration.

'Southern' attitude



Winifred Morgan

The experiment was sponsored by the Scottish Health Department and the Nuffield Trust and one of the objectives was to cut down the wastage of nurses leaving during training. Of the first 75 taking the course, only two dropped out. The course was evaluated by Margaret Scott Wright, who became the first professor of nursing in the UK, at Edinburgh University.

At the suggestion of the retiring matron of the Royal Infirmary at Manchester, Jean Wylie, who, like Morgan, had trained at King's, Morgan applied for the post and was appointed. She was matron at Manchester from 1961 to 1969. In 1967 she went to Iraq for the British Council and Manchester Royal Infirmary agreed to participate in a training scheme for Iraqi nurses. At Manchester, what was conceived to be her superior "southern" attitude was not always appreciated by the northerners, however.

After she left the infirmary, Morgan expanded her international career. She surveyed the international Committee of the Red Cross's dispensaries in the Dhaka area in Bangladesh, as World Health Organisation consultant (1969-74) presided at the nurses' graduation ceremony at Ludhiana Hospital in India, was invited to take up a senior appointment at the new teaching hospital in Amman, Jordan, and for a brief period was director of the International Council of Nurses.

LAURENCE DOPSON

Winifred Florence Morgan, nurse: born London 26 December 1914; died Reigate, Surrey 5 January 1999.

CLASS TRIP LA CLASSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

THE ACID HOUSE

John Pulman

JOHN PULMAN holds a unique place in the history of snooker as a player who held the world title for 11 years.

The legendary Joe Davis, a role model for the young Pulman, won more world championships. However, no other player, including Davis's younger brother Fred, has been in possession of the game's most coveted prize for such an unbroken sequence. And in the modern era where the major prizes swap hands from tournament to tournament, let alone year to year, Pulman's achievement may never be equalled.

Unfortunately for "Pully", the statistics do not tell the full story. That is perhaps why his name doesn't immediately spring to mind when listing past champions in order of greatness. Snooker, despite its current internal wranglings and lack of major sponsorship deals, is in a far healthier state than when Pulman was in his pomp.

A runner-up to Fred Davis in 1955 and 1956, Pulman made it third time lucky when he travelled to Jersey for the 1957 world championship. However, just four players entered the event: Pulman, Kingsley Keenerley, Rex Williams, the present and much maligned chairman of the game's governing body, and the Ulsterman Jackie Rea.

The "final" saw Pulman prevail 39 frames to 34 against Rea to become world champion. Just as his star was in the ascendancy, however, the sport's popularity waned to an all-time low. The championship became dormant until 1964 when revived on a challenge basis. When play resumed Pulman defeated Fred Davis 19-16.

He was to retain his title through six more challenges over the next four years including a six-week tour of South Africa with Williams. On one occasion during the trip, annoyed by the low attendance, they flipped a coin rather than play the match.

Unlike the plethora of titles up for grabs in the modern era, Pulman's triumphs were largely confined to his world championship victories. His last successful defence came in 1968 with a 39-34 victory over the Australian "newcomer" Eddie Charlton. In 1969 the championship reverted to a knockout basis and the title holder lost to another emerging professional, Lancastrian John Spencer, in the first round.

The venue was the Wryton Stadium, Bolton, normally used for all-in wrestling. Pulman had lost his grip on the championship for ever. He did make

the final again in 1970, however, and enjoyed one of his finest moments of a 34-year professional career in 1977.

Against the odds, and perhaps due to his decision to stay teetotal from the turn of the year, Pulman reached the semi-finals of the first Embassy-sponsored event held at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield. He led the eventual champion John Spencer 7-3 and later recovered from 15-10 down to trail just 17-16.

Spencer though secured the all-important 34th frame and went on to beat the Canadian Cliff Thorburn in the final. However, it was testimony to his immaculate cueing action - described by Spencer as "one of the best" - that he was able to compete at an age when most sportsmen and women are well past their prime.

Pulman made two further appearances at the Crucible and played his final professional match in 1981. Already

Pulman's big regret was his failure to score snooker's perfect break - a 147 clearance - though he did manage a 146



Pulman held the world snooker title from 1957 until 1968

perfect break - a 147 clearance - though he did manage a 146.

When he finally hung up his cue, Pulman wasn't lost to the game. It was while he was hospitalised after breaking his leg that he was offered a contract to commentate on snooker for ITV. He continued to do so up until his death. Ironically, his "rival" on BBC was "Whispering" Ted Lowe who had been Pulman's first manager when he turned professional in 1947.

Lowe is widely regarded as the voice of snooker but Pulman was his superior according to the 1985 world champion Dennis Taylor, now a broadcaster for the BBC: "The sound engineers would often tell me what a pleasure it was to work with 'Pully' because his voice was so marvellous."

Before his TV deal Pulman worked for the BBC and was behind the mi-

crophone at the 1980 world championship when coverage was interrupted by live action from the Iranian Embassy in London. When the broadcast resumed Pulman's opening line was: "Welcome back to the world championship. It's a case of from one Embassy to another."

His mellifluous tone was no doubt enriched by a fondness for a glass of whisky or three. John Pulman was a humorous raconteur and bon vivant on the circuit both during and after his playing days.

TREVOR BAXTER

John Pulman, snooker player: born Teignmouth, Devon 12 December 1923; English Amateur Champion 1946; runner-up, World Snooker Championship 1955-56, world champion 1957-68; married (three children); died Northampton 25 December 1998.

HISTORICAL NOTES

SANDRA GULLAND

Was Josephine the key to Napoleon's power?

IN WRITING, I seek answers. Curiosity is my muse. But now, after a decade of researching and writing a trilogy of novels based on the life of Josephine Bonaparte, I begin to understand that I may never know the answers to some questions.

The first of Josephine's mysteries concerned destiny. When a girl on Martinique, Josephine, was told that she would become queen of France, "more than a queen." As the unmarried daughter of impoverished nobility, she was an unlikely candidate. However, the prediction came true.

There are many who accept that there is a destiny and that destiny can, by mysterious means, be foretold. But it is difficult to believe that there might have been a masterplan in which a girl on the island of Martinique is tagged to become empress of the French.

Was it true? Should we believe all that we read? The history of the Napoleonic era is rife with myth: Josephine enjoyed a good story and Napoleon knew the value of propaganda. In later years, historians and biographers explained the "facts" with sometimes rather creative interpretations. Yet the evidence indicated otherwise. A number of references were made to this prediction before it ever came to pass.

If you were to accept the fact of this prediction, other questions arise. If Josephine, as the chosen one, was destined to be queen, then would not her partner become king? Of course, we answer, thinking of Bonaparte (always Bonaparte). Yet there were other men in Josephine's life, and each became, after aligning themselves with her, a candidate for a crown. Her first husband, Alexandre Beauharnais, was for a brief two weeks during the Revolution considered the man who ruled France. And then there was Paul Barras, the man who ran the fledgling republic with Josephine as his partner. (Perhaps a platonist one, but a partner nonetheless.) And then, of course, there was Napoleon, an unemployed Corsican officer. A little over four years after he married Josephine he took control of France. The rest, as they say, is history: he crowned himself and Josephine as well. As empress of the French she was indeed "more than a queen." Five years later Napoleon divorced her and his downfall began.

Coincidence? Was Josephine the key to Napoleon's power? Napoleon's power was indeed great and very much his own, yet most historians will acknowledge that Josephine was a significant (and even essential) part of Napoleon's rise. Yet not only Napoleon, but other men in her life came to power after aligning themselves with her. Was she destined to be queen, her partners king?

It is tempting to resist this interpretation of history, but it cannot be ignored that both Josephine and Napoleon, and to a great extent the public, at the time believed it to be true. Napoleon claimed that Josephine was his lucky star. Many soldiers held that Josephine was the key to Napoleon's extraordinary good luck on the battlefield. After Napoleon divorced her, he was plagued by bad luck: people said that it was because Josephine was no longer with him.

But the question remains: why Josephine? She was a fairly simple woman of great heart. Although intelligent (quite), she was not a great intellect. Her virtues were simple ones: she was an exceptional mother, a good friend, a caring employer, a loving wife. She knew how to be a good hostess. She had a weakness for hats. But somehow, too, she knew how to be an empress. How does one go about such a thing? There are no "how to" books on the subject, not many classes one can take. Yet she stepped into the role easily and with tremendous grace and humanity.

It was, it was said, as if she had been born to the role: and the truth was, she believed it. She believed it was her destiny.

Sandra Gulland is the author of *The Many Lives and Secret Sorrows of Josephine* (Review, £9.99)

Michaela Geiger

MICHAELA GEIGER reached the high point of her career when she served as a Vice-President of the German Parliament (Bundestag) 1997-98.

She had been put forward twice before but had been beaten by her Christian Social Union (CSU) colleague Hans-Joachim Klein. She was Chairman of the CSU's working party on foreign policy 1987-91. Appointed State Secretary (junior minister) for Economic Co-operation in 1991, she remained in that post until 1993. Remarkably, she served at the same level in the Ministry of Defence 1993-97.

Geiger's good looks and charm sometimes led people to underestimate her intelligence and think she had got her promotion because of the CSU's "tokenism" towards women. This ignored the courage and determination with which she pursued her ambitions.

Born Michaela Rall in Bavaria, she was the daughter of a Free Democratic local government politician. Her birthplace, the village of Oberammergau, is the deeply conservative home of the internationally famous Passion Play and is renowned for its woodcarvers. In the predominantly Catholic Bavaria, her family were Evangelical Christians. Michaela Rall went to school in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, and after gaining her university matriculation (Abitur), in 1963, went for technical training rather than entering university.

She qualified as a television screen technician in Nuremberg in 1964 and worked at that trade until her marriage in 1967, when she became Michaela Geiger. She joined the CSU in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in 1971, being elected to the local executive in 1975. In the following years her dedication led to

various CSU posts including that of Deputy Chairperson of the party's Upper Bavaria organisation.

Geiger's chance to be a player on the national stage came after she had caught the eye of the CSU leader Franz Josef Strauss. In 1980, after losing the federal election as the Christian Democrats' candidate for the Chancellorship, Strauss decided not to take his seat in the Bundestag. Geiger took his place with his blessing. She was re-elected in 1983, 1987, 1990 and 1994. In 1994 she was returned with the third highest percentage vote (62 per cent) of any CSU candidate. She also received the highest percentage gained by any woman of any party in Bavaria.

In 1998 the Christian Social Union of Bavaria held its losses to 3.5 per cent, the lowest percentage loss for the Christian Democrats in any region.

Geiger retained her seat, taking 58 per cent of the vote. She was one of only three CSU women to be directly elected and one of the six women out of 47 in the CSU parliamentary party.

She lost her place as Vice-President of the Bundestag at the start of the 1998 session after the CDU/CSU election defeat. Even though she was terminally ill with cancer, Geiger continued her parliamentary work. She remained as Deputy Chair of the Bundestag's foreign affairs committee until the last session before Christmas.

DAVID CHILDS

Michaela Gertrud Rall (Michaela Geiger), politician: born Oberammergau, Germany 29 September 1943; married 1967 (one son; marriage dissolved); died Munich 30 December 1998.

Refusal to pay was repudiatory breach

TUESDAY LAW REPORT 26 JANUARY 1999

Cantor Fitzgerald International v Callaghan and others
Court of Appeal
(Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Judge and Lord Justice Tuckey)
21 January 1999

A DELIBERATE failure by an employer to pay agreed remuneration to an employee would normally be regarded as a repudiatory breach of the contract of employment.

The Court of Appeal allowed the defendants' appeals against an injunction restraining them from canvassing or soliciting anyone to transact on behalf of any competitor of the plaintiff.

The defendants were members of a team of inter-dealer brokers employed by the plaintiff on its Belgian securities desk. On 8 January 1997 the defendants purported to resign from their employment by handing in a joint written notice. They intended to start work with Liberty Eurasia Ltd, a major competitor of the plaintiff.

Allegations of "poaching" teams of brokers had resulted in a mutual agreement which had expired on 31 December 1996 between the plaintiff and Liberty to end the practice. When the defendants left to join Liberty, the plaintiff's entire German desk left simultaneously with the same purpose.

The plaintiff applied for an injunction to restrain the defendants, until after 1 May 1997, from canvassing or soliciting anyone to transact on behalf of any competitor of the plaintiff. The defendants claimed that their contracts of employment had been breached by the plaintiff in that the plaintiff had wrongly failed or refused to comply with agreed arrangements in relation to the defendants' salary packages, in connection with, inter alia, assurances given to them about tax liabilities.

The judge, in granting the injunction, held that although the plaintiff was in breach of a contractually enforceable obligation, nevertheless the failure to pay the sums in question did not amount to "a significant breach going to the root of the contract of employment". He found that the defendants, in purporting to terminate their contracts of employment, were themselves in repudiatory breach. The defendants appealed.

Lord Justice Judge said that the question whether non-payment of agreed wages, or interference by an employer with a salary package, was or was not fundamental to the continued existence of a contract of employment depended on the critical distinction to be drawn between an employer's failure to pay or delay in paying agreed remuneration, and his deliberate failure to do so. Where the failure or delay constituted a breach of contract, that might represent no

more than a temporary fault in the employer's technology, an accounting error or a simple mistake, or illness, accident, or unexpected events, and it would be open to the court to conclude that the breach did not go to the root of the contract.

Where, however, an employer unilaterally reduced his employee's pay or diminished the value of his salary package, the entire foundation of the contract of employment was undermined. An emphatic denial by the employer of his obligation to pay the agreed salary or wage, or a determined resolution not to comply with his contractual obligations in relation to pay and remuneration would, therefore, normally be regarded as repudiatory.

Furthermore, it was doubtful whether de minimis had any relevance: if the amount at stake was very small and the circumstances justifying a minimal reduction were explained to the employee, the likelihood was that he would accept a mutual variation of the original contract. However, an apparently slight change imposed on a reluctant employee by economic pressure exercised by the employer should not be confused with a consensual variation.

In the present case the sums at stake, although not great in the context of the overall package, were not trivial. The refusal to pay them was deliberate and determined, motivated by a desire improperly to pressurise the defendants into harder work. The decision wholly undermined the contract of employment and, accordingly, constituted a repudiatory breach.

KATE O'HANLON
Barrister

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

HEIGHO: Maureen, née Lambert. Widow of WB. Heigho MBE, died in Ealing on 29 November 1998, aged 84. The funeral took place at Ruislip on 7 January.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

HUTCHESON: A celebration of Stella Hutcheson's life will be held at 6.30pm on Thursday 18 February at Friends House, Euston Road (opposite Euston Station).

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS are charged at £8.50 a line (VAT extra).

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Ronald Allison, journalist and broadcaster, 67; Admiral Sir Desmond Cassidy, former Commander-in-Chief, Naval Home Command, 74; Mr Timothy Clifford, director, National Galleries of Scotland, 53; Mr Martin Dunn, editor-in-chief, the *New York Daily News*, 44; Mr Jules Feiffer, playwright and cartoonist, 70; Mr Christopher Hampton, playwright, 53; Mr Kim Hughes, cricketer, 45; The Right Rev David Jenkins, former Bishop of Durham, 74; Miss Eartha Kitt, singer, 71; Mr Simon Langdale, former Headmaster, Shrewsbury School, 62; Miss Joan Leslie, actress, 74; Mr Akio Morita, founder, Sony Corporation, 78; Mr Paul Newman, actor and director, 74; Dr Paul Nurse, director-general, Imperial Cancer Research Fund, 50; Miss Veronica Owen, former Headmistress, Malvern Girls' College, 74; Mr Christopher Price, Principal Emeritus, Leeds Metropolitan University, 67; Mr Anthony Solomons, chairman, Singer and Friedlander,

69; Sir Charles Tidbury, former chairman, Whitbread and Co, 73; Mr Nigel Walsley, chairman, Carlton UK Television, 57.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Ugo (Niccolò) Foscolo, poet, 1778; Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd, judge, poet and editor, 1795; Douglas MacArthur, general, 1880; Stéphane Grappelli, violinist and jazz musician, 1908; Jacqueline du Pré, cellist, 1945.

Deaths: Edward Jenner, physician, discoverer of vaccination, 1823; Jean-Louis-Alexandre Géricault, painter, 1824; Gérard de Nerval (Gérard Labrunie), poet and writer, 1855; Léon-Michel Gambetta, lawyer and statesman, 1882; William Marsden, surgeon and hospital founder, 1867; Charles George Gordon, general, killed at Khartoum 1885; Edward G. Robinson, actor, 1973.

On this day: Brazil was discovered by Vicente Yañes Pinzon, 1500; Sydney Aus-

tralia, was founded by Governor Arthur Phillip, 1788; Napoleon Bonaparte became president of the Italian Republic, formerly the Cisalpine republic, 1802; Hong Kong became a British sovereign territory, 1841; the Cullinan Diamond was found by Captain Wells near Pretoria, South Africa, 1905; the first official Boy Scout troop - the First Glasgow - was formed, 1908; during the Spanish Civil War, Barcelona fell to Franco's army, 1939; India became a republic within the Commonwealth, 1950.

Today is Australia Day, Republic Day India and the Feast Day of St Alberic, St Conan of Man, St Eystein, St Margaret of Hungary, St Paula, St Thordgith or Theorigha of Barking, St Timothy and St Titus.

LECTURES

National Gallery: Humphrey Wine, "New Appearances (iv): Poussin, Landscape with a Calm", 1pm.

Victoria and Albert Museum: Caroline Rimell, "English Cabinets", 2pm. British Museum: Helen Glaister, "The Chinese Silk Route", 11.30am. National Portrait Gallery: Justin Nolan, "Plots and Scandals (ix): The Prince of Wales and the Tranby Croft Scandal, 1891", 1.10pm. The Wallace Collection, London W1: Robert Wenley, "Renaissance Bronzes in the Wallace Collection", 1pm. Gresham College at the City Temple, London EC1: Professor Susan Greenfield, "Neuroscience and Society: some moral issues", 1pm.

DINNERS

Inter-Parliamentary Union - British Group: Mr David Marshall MP, Chairman of the British Group, Inter-Parliamentary Union, hosted a dinner yesterday evening on board RS *Hispaniola*, London WC2, in honour of a Parliamentary Delegation from the Slovak Republic. Mr Josef Migas, Speaker of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, led the delegation.

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE
motile, adj.

zoological one - somebody who reacts to motor imagery rather than auditory or visual. Updike is the supreme chronicler of

sight and sound, a dextrous vocabulary to hand. Kermodé surmises that this is the last of Beck, "the funhouse distortion of his inventor", but, not the latest issue of the *New Yorker* has a new story with such phrases as "her livid nipples" and "toward dawn there was a prolonged bright truck that must have been Buffalo".

Rustic enemy No 1

Oliver Walston is a fat-cat farmer with a huge subsidy and he doesn't care who knows it. He also thinks farmers are a bunch of whingers. No wonder they hate him. By Ann Treneman

Oliver Walston is in love with the sound of his own voice. I know this because he tells me so, but I could have figured it out for myself. He talks non-stop. Actually, that's not true. He stops to eat and to laugh. He also slows down a bit when he hears the sound of a soundbite that he likes. "People love Fat-Cat Farmer. Yes, Fat-Cat Farmer has really caught on, you know," he crows as we bounce along in his four-wheel drive. I did not even know that Mercedes made four-wheel drives, but here we are in one. The seats are leather but it is the view that is really impressive: miles and miles of Cambridgeshire farmland that belong to Mr Fat Cat.

"Surely you are now a Famous Fat-Cat Farmer," I say. This is not just flattery. He has just presented *Against the Grain* on BBC2 and has made something of a stir by speaking frankly about his annual subsidy cheque. This may sound boring but when you hear the figure £180,000, it suddenly gets interesting. Mr Walston thinks it is an outrage that you and I are subsidising the likes of him, and he believes that every farmer should tell us the size of his subsidy. He wants them to be loud and proud about it. This makes him a farming heretic or, as he puts it, a "weird nut". He seems to like this and I'm not surprised when he rejects the idea of being famous. "No, not famous. Infamous! Infamous!"

He is proving to be a very able hate figure. The letters page of *Farmer's Weekly* is positively seething at the moment. "Walston has never had to struggle," says one headline. "Pompous and selfish Oliver," says another. They call him smug and a braggart. He gets anonymous telephone calls, some of them nasty. Last week he was told by a Somerset farmer that it is said that he should be put up against a fence and shot. "I hope that was a joke," he says.

I suspect that it was not entirely said in jest because Mr Walston has made many farmers extremely angry. I have gone to his farm in the village of Thimbleton to talk to him about this. In his father's day, there were 80 workers employed on the farm. Now there are four. Mr Walston grows wheat, barley, sugar beet, oil seed rape, peas, beans and another crop called "set-aside". He lives in a lovely converted barn and stables. He is 57 but looks much younger. He has made lunch and obviously knows his way around the kitchen. "I'm married to an American!" he says. "I'm not sure what this means. We chat about the phrase 'new man'." I say that my test is who cleans the toilet. He admits that he doesn't. But neither does his wife. Right. He brings out the Beaujolais. He says he has a "small house" in France. I don't believe him: I'm sure it is a large house but it seems surly to press the point.



Oliver Walston on his Cambridgeshire farm: 'I might look rich but it ain't true. I have to watch the bottom line'

Andrew Fox

Especially since he has so many points to press on with. He talks with great passion about farming, but there is much of a personal nature that he does not mention. He talks about his father, for instance, but does not say that he was the wealthy socialist life peer Lord Walston. He says that he was known as "the son of..." for so long that it is a relief not to hear it these days. His mother, Catherine, is also infamous in that she had a 15-year affair with Graham Greene. He spent 18 months researching a book about her but then gave it up at the request of a family member. His office reveals him to have many interests: David Hockney and touring the Arctic on an ice-breaker, to name two.

None of these compares to farming, however. He says that owning land is the second most powerful drive in the human psyche. No prizes for guessing the other. He says buying the farm was like 12 orgasms rolled into one. This will surprise many people, not because of the orgasms but because most people assume that Oliver Walston inherited his land. Not true. He tells me a story about this - he loves to tell stories - but first I say that he is his own worst enemy. Perhaps the reason people think he is a fat-cat farmer who has never had to struggle is that he says things such as "I was born with a silver spoon in every orifice". He

looks at me. "But it's true! Eton, Cambridge, Princeton. Wouldn't you call that being born with a silver spoon in every orifice? What the hell else can I say? But when people say that I don't have to watch the bottom line... shit, I do."

So this is his story. "My dad inherited 2,000 acres in South Cambridgeshire from his mum and dad and

he says that he owes £1m on this farm. "So I consider that a lot of money. And most people would too. It pisses me off when people say that I don't know about the bottom line. I have to make a pretty damn good earning just to pay back the mortgage." He says that this amounts to £60 an acre and notes that I don't have to be a genius to figure out that the mortgage

times that no one believes them when things really are tough (as they are now). He says that the way that the green pound works meant that Norman Lamont's Black Wednesday was a godsend for farmers. "We called it Golden Wednesday!" But no one said so in public. In fact, no one says much in public about subsidies or good times or Golden Wednesdays. "If farmers had been more honest, more straightforward, more open with the public in the past, the public would be more sympathetic with them today."

Mr Walston does not seem to suffer from this problem. When he has a good harvest, he does more than talk about it. He commissions an engraved silver goblet. He gets them out of the cupboard. In 1982 it was for sugar beet. In 1983 for wheat, in 1991 for peas and - in 1993 - for "set-aside". This last one reads: "Three hundred acres of set-aside produced absolutely nothing."

The mugs are examples of beautiful workmanship with engraved insects, snails, rabbits and mice peeking out where you least expect. I say so and Mr Walston blasts me with a laugh. "I can see the piece already. I wasn't exactly born yesterday. Surrounded by unlimited silver tankards, he sat there telling farmers to get into the real world." Surely even he would have to admit that there is some truth in it.

Walston says buying the farm was like 12 orgasms rolled into one. This will surprise many people. Not because of the orgasms, but because most people assume he inherited it. Not true

farmed it. He had six children. He gave the land to us and I rented it from my brothers and sisters. They then sold it to the highest bidder which turned out to be the Kent County Council Pension Fund. So then I was a tenant farmer for the Kent County Council Pension Fund. And about three years ago I managed to buy it back. I borrowed a huge amount of money. And that is where I am today. So when a farmer says to you - 'bloody Oliver Walston, he's so rich' - the answer is: he might look that way but it ain't true."

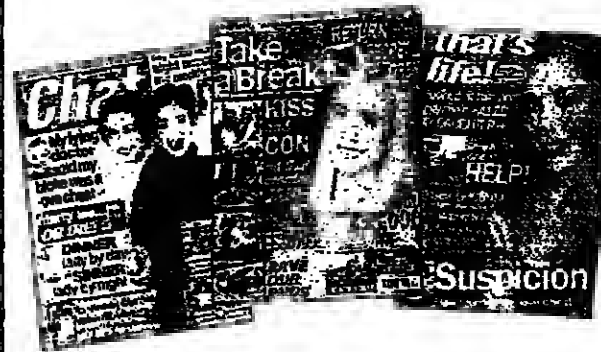
is £120,000 a year. At the moment he could not survive without his subsidy cheque, but thinks five years would be enough time to wear himself off it. He suspects it's going to happen anyway, and that Nick Brown, the Agriculture Secretary, agrees.

If this is the case, he could just be quiet and it would happen anyway. Does he not care what people think? "Not really. I'm well aware that farmers think I'm a traitor."

It doesn't get any nicer. He says that farmers have cried wolf so many

THE JOYS OF MODERN LIFE

30. WOMEN'S WEEKLIES BY HESTER LACEY



DINNER LADY By Day, Sinner Lady By Night! Marry Me... Or Die! The Eyes of a Killer! No Sex Because He Hates My Breasts! And (my personal favourite) A Wheelie Bin Saved My Life! These are all headlines from a blissful Nineties publishing phenomenon: the cheap 'n' cheerful weekly mag that mainly relies on readers' true experiences. The likes of *That's Life!*, *Take a Break* and *Chat* are all racy reads than the old stalwarts such as *Woman*; they pay their readers to reveal all and it is astounding just what people are prepared to admit to for a fee of a few hundred quid.

All human life is there: feisty mums and brave kiddies battling against the odds, heroic granites, villainous cheats, two-faced friends and faithless spouses, birth, love, sex and death. Trite and banal, of course, but that's their great strength.

Best of all, every single story has to be illustrated with genuine photos of the people involved, and those grainy, badly focused snapshots of the pale, the spotty, the overweight, the weirdly dressed, the strangely coiffed, in short the normal, speak more poignantly than any glossy posed-by-models shot can ever do; boy, are these people real.

To this already heady mix, the editors add liberal amounts of extra sex and gore and other such general good humour. Know a good rude joke? Send it to *That's Life!* which pays £15 for every near-the-knowledge chuckle printed. Another publication has a column called "My Operation", bearing a helpful label that warns the squeamish on no account to read it when there is a particularly gruesome procedure being described. Another has a regular feature in which life-saving dogs and comforting cats write in to

describe how they have kept hope and love alive in their human owners.

And these magazines are the home of one of the most fantastical notions ever dreamt up by a fevered editorial brain in search of an economical space-filler: the readers' thrifty tips column. The versions that have since appeared in some newspapers and glossier mags are just pale and feeble imitations. Each issue carries a perfunctory nod towards cookery and interiors articles, but these are easily skipped.

Printed on flimsy paper, these mags are ideal for folding into a handbag to while away a boring journey. Of course, it's not quite the same as being seen reading *The Economist* or *Prospect*, but I've caught plenty of quite respectable-looking fellow commuters reading over my shoulder. I mean, who could possibly resist such nuggets as My Hubby Ran Off With My Horse's Best Friend But He's No Stallion, or Watching My Husband Make Love To My Neighbour Turns Me On?

This kind of stuff can be purchased for a very reasonable 62p a week - hardly pricey even when you become addicted and have to get all of them 52 times a year (yes, it happens). In most women's magazines the problem page is one of the most exciting; in this bunch the problem pages pale beside the real-life stories, which would be pretty refreshing at any price.

Incidentally, in case anyone is wondering about the life-saving wheelie bin: two young mums were snoozing unsuspectingly as one of their children played with matches and set the house on fire. But they were all saved when they managed to scramble out of a first-floor window, using a handy rubbish receptacle to facilitate their escape.)

The house is haunted but we're not scared - honest

There's a horrible stain on the floor - and it's spreading. But scarier still: who wrote 'kill' on the cellar wall? By Cayte Williams

THE STUDENTS' huge grey-brick house in Fallowfield is rambling, dead creepy and gradually falling apart. There's a Dennis Nilsen-style cellar and the front garden shields all kinds of nameless menaces behind its high hedge and brick walls.

Rachel, who shares the top floor with Dani, has discovered an eerie stain on her kitchen floor. Or, rather, what used to be her kitchen floor. You may remember that Rachel had the bright idea of inviting the local environmental health officer to the house because the landlord was dragging his heels over some major repairs. No one else was particularly bothered, but to Rachel it was the principle of the thing.

Unfortunately, her plans backfired horribly when the officer declared her kitchen a health-hazard (there was no fire escape) and promptly arranged for it to be removed.

All that's left now is a few marooned food cupboards above a sea of rubbish, dirty plates and

THIS STUDENT LIFE



SPRING TERM, WEEK 3 AT THE MANCHESTER STUDENT HOUSE

beer cans. Weaving between the debris is the said stain. "It's greasy, and it keeps growing," says a bemused Rachel, pointing to it fearfully with her toe. She hasn't touched, sniffed or investigated any further. "I don't have a clue what it is..."

Dani and Rachel are spending less and less time in the house. While everyone else is happy to live in communal squalor, they have tried to make the best of their little pied-à-terre. And

where did it get them? Squalid little quarters with all the atmosphere of the Bates Motel.

It's common knowledge with the rest of the house that they intend to move out, but Rachel is being coy. "I'd rather not say," she says. The relationship between Rachel and Dani and the boys has cooled down considerably, and any queries about the girls are met with "we never see them" or "we just say hello" and a shrug. They're falling out, it's hardly surprising. If Dani and Rachel move out, what is there left to rent? A couple of rooms leading out to a gutted kitchen.

This is not the first time something inexplicable has happened in the students' gloomy halls. Last year, after watching *The Exorcist*, Leona went down into the cellar to re-light the boiler, saw "kill" written in red on the wall, and was so spooked she couldn't sleep.

Ian has his own chilling story. "The guy who comes here to do

the maintenance says that a man who once lived here went mad and killed his son," he explains, "and now he haunts this house. When I first moved in here on my own, I used to hear knocking and rattling noises coming from upstairs and I knew no one else lived here. But I'm not scared, I don't think anything's going to harm me."

Rachel is obviously not happy about living in a haunted house, and even Tascha is spooked. "Everyone's scared to go into that cellar," she says with a nervous laugh, "but I genuinely believe it was one of Ian's mates who wrote 'kill' on the wall." The rest of the boys think the whole thing has got out of proportion.

Leona and Tascha, however, are making a stand against the broken boiler. Rather than buying little heaters for their rooms, they are planning to hold out against the cold until it's fixed. "It's the principal of the thing," they say. Or is it just that they are simply too scared to go into the cellar?



DANI studying Biology



ROSIE studying French



DAVID studying Management



LEONA was studying Maths



TASH studying Management



ALISTAIR studying Management



RACHAEL studying Art History



IAN studying Geography



ROBBIE studying Economics



40 Weekends in New York to be won with TALK to NEW YORK

Talk Radio and The Independent are flying 40 pairs of winners to New York for a weekend in March in our 'Talk to New York' Competition. Throughout February there are 2 New York Weekends to be won every weekday.

Talk Radio, on 1053 and 1089am/medium wave, is the only national commercial talk station. Talk Radio gives you the chance to have your say on the issues that matter. You can talk direct to celebrities and news makers, from Foreign Secretary Robin Cook to actor and comedian Robbie Coltrane, from Formula One driver David Coulthard to boxing impresario Don King.

How to Play 'Talk to New York'

Every day from next Monday we're printing a fresh map, in The Independent Review section, showing 2 different locations in Manhattan.

Tune to Talk Radio and listen for the Avenue and Street No.s for one of that day's locations. Identify it on the map and you could be a winner.

How to find Talk Radio

1053 and 1089am across the UK and in the following areas:
1107 am: Boston (Lincs), Gatwick, Liverpool, Lydd (Kent), Paignton (Devon), Southampton
1071 am: Newcastle, Nottingham

When to listen to Talk Radio

For your chance to win a trip for two to New York listen to Talk Radio at these times every weekday:

8.20am The Big Boys' Breakfast with Banks & Ferrari

6.20pm Sportszone

talk radio
1053/1089 am

THE INDEPENDENT

Ho

Her dancers

Evasive, Pina Bausch's status the year. W joins the cu at the end formance, it hardly seems it is her and not a hologram a gaunt, baggy-troused and overworked creator of p images who smiles a sphinx locks arms with her inter

Tanztheater Wuppertal family, her nomadic tribe, and women who dance, sp and play games. They per stages covered in grass, or mud. They are so devoted they will throw themselves walls, wear nappies and sim faces with lipstick - and th the men. They are multina individually flavoured as people, the opposite of flow lot clones. They act with a ttered, childlike directnes are you and me, with our cl experiences, our adult ho fears, our joys and miserie

Like us, they are all aj though when the company 35 years ago they more or longed to the same gen Some early members have but rush on stage when P ones them back for a ne Malou Airaud did for the Gluck *Poligamia* in Turin 1996 Edinburgh Festival continue in the company, hulky Jan Minarik who spe in carrying and cross-d and Dominique Mercy, a blond Frenchman, edging still dancing flat-out solos.

The performances of Vi week will be the compan London season since 1982, needs them more than th London. Wherever they they are sold out. Tickete herades stand on paveme the June clamminess of P December snow of Berlin - scrawled notices, "one please". A reluctant inter Bausch manages very well PRs and journalists. Eve you want to know about, says, you can see in her w occasionally she caves in, o her dancers to cave in, es this time, to please an edg Wells publicity machine.

Dominique Mercy turns charming and informative how it is that Bausch's per - trained dancers who do ballet class - don't have verbal delivery of non-act He explains: "It's because of the material comes fr dancers. What you see pieces, in these small scen the result of questions whi has asked us."

Bausch uses these ques cues to elicit improvis "And each dancer responds sonal way, in keeping wit experiences and imaginati out of this come many Bausch's trademark comp the enchanting visual joke as the makeshift swimming last year's *Moscurra* F plastic sheet held by two m filled with buckets of wat rerunning of intense m until they become heart-br such as the wail in *Tanzol* (1992), who repeatedly herself out of the snow, on

Lyric

POP

MOGWAI
ASTORIA
LONDON

JANUARY IS the awards se in the music business, an the past few years the NME countered that orgy of self-gratulation, the Brits, with i poste, the Brats. This focus younger talent, accompa by a week of concerts. But year's seen the series ren: the NME Premier Shows, i the beer company respons for sponsorship.

The musical policy has i somewhat less adventu too, virtually all the headli so far already having ha been quite capable of, con tional pop success - excep Sunday evening's attrac Glasgow's Mogwai, four ty-somethings who wield tars and eschew vocals, yei play to a full house.

With their second al due in March, this show vide a chance to debu material to a loyal audie The basic Mogwai formu simple - one guitar, start dabbling with a mildly di dant riff, the other instru join in one by one; the sudden dramatic take-off could occur at apparently

Hopelessly devoted to you

Her dancers are old hands but the inspiration of Pina Bausch remains as fresh as ever. By Nadine Meisner

Elusive, reclusive: Pina Bausch's mythical status grows by the year. When she joins the curtain-call at the end of a performance, it hardly seems possible it is her and not a hologram. She is a gaunt, baggy-trousered figure, an overworked creator of potent images who smiles a sphinx smile and looks arms with her interpreters.

Tanztheater Wuppertal are her family, her nomadic tribe, 30 men and women who dance, speak, sing and play games. They perform on stages covered in grass, or snow, or mud. They are so devoted to Pina they will throw themselves against walls, wear nappies and smear their faces with lipstick - and that's just the men. They are multinational, as individuals flavoured as ordinary people, the opposite of flawless ballet clones. They act with an undisturbed, childlike directness. They are you and me, with our childhood experiences, our adult hopes and fears, our joys and miseries.

Like us, they are all ages - although when the company started 25 years ago they were more or less belonged to the same generation. Some early members have retired but rush on stage when Pina beckons them back for a revival, as Malou Airaud did for the Bausch-Gluck *Iphigenia in Tauris* at the 1996 Edinburgh Festival. Some continue in the company, such as hulky Jan Minarik who specialises in carrying and cross-dressing, and Dominique Mercy, a sinewy blond Frenchman, edging 50 but still dancing flat-out solos.

The performances of *Viktor* this week will be the company's first London season since 1982. London needs them more than they need London. Wherever they appear, they are sold out. Ticketless desperados stand on pavements - in the June clamminess of Paris, the December snow of Berlin - holding scrawled notices, "one ticket please". A reluctant interviewee, Bausch manages very well without PRs and journalists. Everything you want to know about her, she says, you can see in her work. But occasionally she caves in, or allows her dancers to cave in, especially this time, to please an edgy Sadler's Wells publicity machine.

Dominique Mercy turns out to be charming and informative. I ask how it is that Bausch's performers - trained dancers who do a daily ballet class - don't have the stiff verbal delivery of non-actors. He explains: "It's because much of the material comes from the dancers. What you see in the pieces, in these small scenes, are the result of questions which Pina has asked us."

Bausch uses these questions or cues to elicit improvisations. "And each dancer responds in a personal way, in keeping with their experiences and imagination." So out of this come many of the Bausch's trademark components: the enchanting visual jokes, such as the makeshift swimming-pool in last year's *Masurca* Pogo, a plastic sheet held by two men and filled with buckets of water; or the rerunning of intense moments until they become heart-breaking, such as the wait in *Tanzabend II* (1992), who repeatedly drags herself out of the snow, only to be



What I try to find the pictures that best convey the emotion I want to convey: Pina Bausch's *Nelken* from 1982

Geraint Lewis

carried back tenderly and cruelly. If the pieces have the multiplicity of life, it's because they come from just that: from multiple points of view, with Bausch as a funnel distilling them into theatre. She sifts, edits, collates and glues together. "There is a trust between her and us," says Mercy, who in *Nelken* (1982) plunges his face into a pile of raw sliced onions. "I know that she will not exploit us simply as a form of exhibitionism. It is not the purpose of her work."

He first met Bausch in 1971. "I was immediately dazzled and touched by her person and her choreography," he says. Others recognised her genius early on and Bausch did not struggle through wilderness years. Born 59 years ago, in Solingen, in the Ruhr, she enrolled as a dance student in the Folkwang School in nearby Essen. The distinguished choreographer Kurt Jooss was in charge of the dance department and Bausch learnt classical ballet, modern dance and choreography. At 19 she won a scholarship to New York, where she went to the Juilliard School of Music and worked with another exceptional choreographer, Antony Tudor.

She returned to Essen to assist Jooss with the Folkwangstudio, the school's graduate performing group which he was restarting. She created her first piece for them in 1968, remembered as "very abstract, very dancery," and soon after became the artistic director, a post she still holds.



'There is a trust between Pina and us. I know that she will not exploit us simply as a form of exhibitionism'

Then came the bold invitation from another neighbouring town, Wuppertal, to form a choreographer-led company at their opera house and she started, with Mercy, Jan Minarik and Malou Airaud among her dancers. The opera house's subscribers, accustomed to conventional ballet, took time to adjust. Her launch piece, *Fritz* (1974), was already dance theatre, though it had no text. "It was about the fan-

tasies of a boy," Mercy remembers. "And there was a parade of strange guests: a bearded woman, twins, a sick man in a nightgown - that was me." The house was only half-full to start with. "But then people started leaving, slamming the doors behind them."

Her danced versions of Gluck's

are clear shifts of theme and emphasis. For example, a Fascist oppression runs through the red carnations of *Nelken*, which Jan Minarik closes by declaring: "I became a dancer because I did not want to be a soldier." Whereas *Danzon* (1995) seems to be about ageing and the sadness of this, especially for dancers. It also marks Bausch's performing comeback, in a wrenchingly elegiac solo of arm gestures that resemble a farewell.

So what about *Viktor*, premiered in 1986? It exemplifies Bausch's desire to preserve the old as well as create the new. It is one of her vast, broad-canvas spectacles, like 1980, which she showed on her last London visit. *Viktor* was also her first co-production with funding from a foreign city - Rome, in this case - an arrangement she has often repeated since.

"When we do a co-production," says Mercy, "we usually arrive three weeks early in the city to gather sensations and generally open our antennae." These impressions colour the studio improvisations, but the result is an evocation instead of a literal depiction. "*Viktor* is not about

Rome, because what interests Pina is not the city, it is the people living there."

Who is "*Viktor*"? "He's a ghost; but it will be up to you to decide who or what this ghost is." What else can he say about the themes? He laughs and shakes his head. "When Pina starts work, she doesn't even talk to us about themes." Although she must have certain ideas in the back of her mind, she prefers to keep things fluid, so that the material can develop an organic life of its own. Similarly, to explain a piece before it is, is to fix my expectations beforehand, closing my mind. "It would be a betrayal to explain *Viktor* to you," Mercy says.

What I try to find the pictures, or the images, that can best express the emotion I want to convey," Bausch once told me. "I am not telling a story in a normal way. Each person in the audience is part of the piece; you bring your own experience, your own fantasy, your own feeling in response to what you see. Everybody comes away with a different impression."

Sadler's Wells, London EC1, tomorrow to Sat (0171-863 8000)

A ghost of Noël past

THEATRE

BLITHE SPIRIT
SALISBURY PLAYHOUSE

"IT IS fairly natural," wrote Noël Coward, "that my writing should be appreciated casually, because my personality, performances, music and legend get in the way. Some day, I suspect, when Jesus has definitely got me for a sunbeam, my works may be adequately assessed."

What he did not realise was that by then, 50 years of comic acting tradition would have intervened to cloud the crisp clarity of his work. Gareth Armstrong's production of *Blithe Spirit* is a mishmash of styles, from the heightened outrage of Ayckbourn to the cartoon caricature of *Allo, Allo*. There is still a masterpiece underneath, but attempts to tart it up serve only to detract - as if someone has pebbledashed Rouen Cathedral.

The fault lies primarily in an apparent lack of faith. There seems to be an overwhelming devotion to getting the laugh from the portrayal - the funny walk or the comic grimace - not the line. Many of the cast stretch themselves to drag a giggle where no giggle should be dragged, all too often at the expense of Coward's expertly crafted writing, with - paradoxically - many comic throwaways simply thrown away.

The greatest harm is done by Penella Fielding's Madam Arcati. Her drawing eccentricity and grinding comic "business" do the script no favours at all, ruining the pacing and rhythm of Coward's wit.

But the production is saved by Celia Nelson's Ruth. In a play about reincarnation, it is spooky to see an actress who is such a complete embodiment of a young Glenda Jackson. She plays the aggrieved second wife, displaced by her predecessor's ghost, with scalpel precision - and she justifiably garners most of the laughs. As her deceased rival, Mairéad Carty makes an excellent Puck. However, when she forgets this she becomes a fine, petulant Elvira.

Ultimate responsibility must be laid at the door of the director. Gareth Armstrong seems to have devoted too much time to blocking the characters in a whirlwind of moves so convoluted as to induce dizziness, and too little time to ensuring that the cast grasped the art of Cowardian comedy, a skill as specific as *commedia dell'arte* or *Noh* theatre.

You have to strip away a lot of the staging to get to it, but Coward's script still shines through, the lines and laughs as pure and entertaining as they were when he wrote it - in less than a week - 58 years ago.

The production amuses, but despite the contemporary "improvements", not because of them. We can still agree with Coward's modest assessment, "with the maximum of self-satisfaction, that those six days in Portneirion in May 1941 were not wasted". It will take a different production, however, before *Blithe Spirit*'s true qualities are once again fully displayed.

TORY O'CONNOR MORSE

Booking to 13 Feb (0172 320333)

Lyrics. Who needs them?

POP

MOGWAI
ASTORIA
LONDON

JANUARY IS the awards season in the music business, and for the past few years the NME has countered that orgy of self-congratulation, the Brits, with its riposte, the Brats. This focuses on younger talent, accompanied by a week of concerts. But this year's seen the series renamed the NME Premier Shows, after the beer company responsible for sponsorship.

The musical policy has been somewhat less adventurous too, virtually all the headliners so far already having had, or been quite capable of, conventional pop success - except for Sunday evening's attraction, Glasgow's Mogwai, four twenty-somethings who wield guitars and eschew vocals, yet still play to a full house.

With their second album due in March, this show provides a chance to debut new material to a loyal audience. The basic Mogwai formula is simple - one guitar starts off dabbling with a mildly discordant riff, the other instruments join in one by one; there's a sudden dramatic take-off that could occur at apparently any



Soft, loud, soft: the Mogwai way

Steve Gillett

point; then it all drifts away again, reaffirming itself occasionally in another rush of power. It may bear a snappy title such as the night's almost ambient opener "May Nothing But Happiness Come Through Your Door", or the extraordinarily brutal "Like Herod".

In the hands of less skilful practitioners of what some label "post rock", this style has already become generic before the wider world has even woken up to it, but Mogwai handle it skilfully, never sounding like a mere rock band that's neglected to pen any lyrics.

STEVE JELBERT
A version of this review appeared in later editions of yesterday's paper

If it ain't got that swing

CLASSICAL

LPO/WAYNE MARSHALL
ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL
LONDON

THE LONDON Philharmonic Orchestra calls its popular Friday night series *Classics for Pleasure*, which we can only assume is intended to draw distinction from the unpleasurable experiences that so many of us choose to put ourselves through. Then there was the title of this concert: *Taking Jazz Seriously*. Presumably Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony* was slipped in for the benefit of those who didn't take jazz seriously, that is.

Wayne Marshall - conductor and master of ceremonies - couldn't explain its presence, either. In fact, he couldn't explain much of anything, principally because he hadn't put much preparation into his introductions. If you are going to play tour guide with your audience, then you have to be focused about it. And you can't keep using the word "obviously", be-

cause obviously you wouldn't be there if it were so obvious. The jazz connection was a little fuzzily thought through. Prokofiev apart (call that an aberration), if you are going to include Leonard Bernstein on the bill, then surely you go for one of his New York pieces, his dance music, his jam, "Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs". Good though it was to hear again, "Divertimento" - written for the Boston Symphony centennial in 1980 and rarely performed - is rather too cryptic in its musical machinations to be fully appreciated in the context of a programme like this. His songs went down rather better, thanks to the presence of Kim Criswell.

Granted, she's not a natural ingénue. "Dream with Me" - a gorgeous and little-known Bernstein song dropped from his 1949 score for *Peter Pan* - was by no means the sweetest soprano you've ever heard.

But hot on her heels came wisecracking Ruth from Ohio with her "One Hundred Easy Ways (To Lose A Man)" from *Wonderful Town*, at which point those of us with any sense were taking cover. And better yet was her virtuosic rendition of Dinah's scene "What a Movie!" - from Bernstein's remarkable one-act opera *Trouble in Tahiti* - which isn't a number but a nervous breakdown. Shucking her concert gown for a garish South Sea sarong, Criswell left us in no doubt about that. Later, she and Marshall paid homage to Duke Ellington in his centenary year, but this mighty handful of his

greatest hits didn't really sit so well in this hall. John Fox's arrangements (particularly his way with strings) got around the "symphony orchestra" anomaly, but where piano alone nursed the voice, the sound balance was too uneven.

Then again, Marshall is a better pianist than he is a conductor. It's one thing keeping tags on a jazz band - Shostakovich's "Suite No 1" more or less plays itself - but getting Gershwin around Paris (*An American in Paris*) is another matter. Was he late for his plane? You'd expect a jazzier like Marshall to sink his soul into the central blues (where were those insinuating saxes?), but real freedom demands the kind of discipline (and technique) he doesn't yet have.

EDWARD SECKERSON

Repeated on 29 Jan

EN
O

"An evening to raise the spirits"
Sunday Telegraph

The
Barber of Seville

Rossini

Tonight
January 28 7.30
February 4 11 at 7.30pm
Even Jervis Day Boxes

Tickets from £5 - £55

Box Office
0171 632 8300
24 hours

Adventures in the skin trade

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres had a thing about power. About sex. About plump flesh. And he loved a frock. By Tom Lubbock



'Madame Moitessier' and 'Monsieur Bertin': 'in Ingres, there's a consciousness that a clothed body is a naked body touched all over'

National Gallery of Art, Washington/Musée du Louvre, Paris

The painter has three arms – or so apparently he'd have us think. In an early self-portrait, he stands before his blank canvas, one arm rubbing it with a cloth, another ready with the chalk, and a third, no. But slung over his near shoulder, there's a hefty overcoat with a prominent, solid-looking, distinctly limb-like sleeve. The eye can't help doing a double-take every time.

Now you may put this down to a young artist's oversight, but I'm not sure. Ingres (for it is he) was a precocious painter. The oversights of his youth aren't overcome. They turn into the idiosyncrasies of his maturity. He was one of the smartest and most intense of European portrait painters. He could summon up the human presence as few others could. He also had very strong and funny feelings about the human form.

This wasn't always obvious. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867) used to be one of painting's straight men, the epitome of the slick, the smooth, the square, the 19th-century academic artist *par excellence*. What that view saw was his formality, his high micro-finish, his astonishingly sensitive rendering of tone and texture – and his unflinching flattery of the pride and property of his bourgeois sitters. Rightly: without those qualities, technical and moral, the portraits would be nothing.

But going round *Portraits by Ingres*, which opens at the National Gallery tomorrow, dwelling on one astonishing creation after another, you're conscious at the same time of other agendas which can hardly be called hidden.

The show's opening knock-out blow is *Napoleon on his Imperial Throne*, done when the artist was 26. Flattery on the grandest scale, you might say, a triumph of golden regalia and tassels, red velvet, white fur and satin. But then, think: Bokassa, or some other self-made-up emperor. That's what Napoleon was. And Ingres' picture, with its highly artificial display of the attributes of kingship, on the verge of collapsing into an assemblage of rich bits, might almost be mockery, a royalist satire on this Corsican oil, decking himself out in the robes of Charlemagne: a fabricated image of a fabricated authority.

So much for power. As for sex – I don't know that there's a name for Ingres' sexual imagination. It's embodied, almost fully formed, in the 17-year-old's portrait drawing of *Barbara Borsi*. What's she like? Her upper half is a Frankenstein's monster of idealisations, beauty formulas combined into deformity. The head which seems to be only a swelling on top of the neck, the smoothly arched shoulder that starts to resemble a humped back, the breasts so high that they project from the collarbone – such is Ingres' model woman, the doll he

realises again and again in his mythological fantasies, and which always infects his pictures of real women, too.

Their voluptuousness isn't only a matter of shape. They are lapped in luxury, a sensuous opulence into which their bodies half-disintegrate. The oval image of *Madame Rivière* is like a sweet-jar, full of bon-bons and jubes – a pile-up of gorgeous stuffs, and among them some pieces of fine, plump flesh. A moral critique here is both obvious and powerless. It is

laid in her lap. Something very strange happens to these ladies' limbs. They go soft and limp. They seem to be filleted, or like empty skins filled with water, lolling. They often don't seem to be properly attached to the rest of the bodies.

These tender morsels of swelling chubbiness are part of a general air of molting and innuendo, of voyeurism – or its tactile equivalent – as in accidentally on purpose rubbing or pressing up against someone's body in a crowd. The dresses

highly respectable Dublin ladies' complain of Leopold Bloom's unwanted attentions. "He said that he had seen from the gods my peerless globes as I sat in a box of the Theatre Royal..." He lauded almost extravagantly my nether extremities, my swelling calves in silk hose drawn up to the limit, and eulogised glowingly my other hidden treasures in priceless lace..." In Ingres, too, it's the stately poshness of the women that pricks on the fantasy. In Ingres, too, there's the consciousness that a clothed body is a naked body touched all over. These are portraits in which at every point – to use the old divorce-court phrase – intimacy occurs.

Is it only women who get such treatment from Ingres? I would have thought so. But a fellow critic said that she got this feeling off the male portraits too, and I can see it in some of them. The spreading, placid features of *Joseph-Antoine Mollo* seem to lack a supporting skull. His soft-brushed brown coat seems to lack a body inside it. But for a masterfully ambiguous study in masculinity, the portrait *Louis-François Bertin* has no rival.

Look at the way clothing and furniture feel their way round his stout and imposing figure. The sharp, curving edge of his high collar nicks his jowly chops. The smoothly curving edge of his chairback encases his circumference like the rim of a tub. Notice the patch of bright red chair-

seat that peeps out just beneath his crotch, and sets off the dark contour of his trousered testicles – and then implies his whole, massive underside. Notice the oddly uncommanding nature of the hands-on-knees pose, the limp arms and stiff, crabby hands that seem to have been just gently placed in that position.

In the end, you have to say that Ingres had a thing (call it a vision, call it an obsession). It was a thing about power and passivity and impassivity, how they're all mixed up. In a way it's a natural concern for a bespoke portraitist – artist, sitter: who commands? who obeys? – but it goes deeper than that. It can take the form of worshipping sensual stupor, as in the extraordinary Washington portrait of *Madame Moitessier*, where she stands statuesque, her head and neck jawlessly fused, her face that of a dumb Roman matron's hush, her blank, lazy eyes drifting in divergent directions, her left arm hanging soft and dislocated, her shoulders quite asymmetrical under her dead-centred hair-do, her underlip giving a sulky little pout. And I'm not sure what it's about, but it's absolutely enthralling.

Portraits by Ingres – Images of an Epoch is at the National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, London WC2, every day, tomorrow to 25 April; admission £6, concessions £4

Something very strange happens to the ladies' limbs. They go soft and limp. They seem to be filleted

evident that this is bourgeois portraiture supreme: a perfect marriage of sex and money, a *mélange* of expensive fabric and expensive skin, the wife a pampered chattel among chattels. But whatever you say, the pictures only reply: "indeed – and how beautiful, how delicious".

But there are more curious goings-on, which begin to exceed anything Ingres' patrons might have demanded. Look at the dreamy features of *Madame de Senones*; how they seem to be not quite fixed to her head, to swim, to float in the pool of her face. Or look at her velvet-sleeved right arm, enormously long, apparently lifeless, just

and pillows are primed and patted and flounced and tweaked and plumped. Ingres is the great *peintre-couturier*. He loved a frock, and got actively involved in what his sitters wore.) His compositions themselves are full of pictorial tucks and nudges: little clusters of sharply rendered accessories that poke in at the corner or peep out behind someone's back. And this feeling is then picked up by the brushwork, too. The exquisite, meticulous finish of each depicted surface becomes, as it were, the painter's finishing touch.

It's all very close to that passage of soft-porn parody in *Ulysses*, where "several

THE INDEPENDENT COLLECTOR

JOHN WINDSOR'S GUIDE TO COLLECTING CONTEMPORARY ART. THIS WEEK: CHARLES HADCOCK

If you like the look of Nautilus shells, the whorled patterns of sunflower heads or the proportions of the Parthenon, it is for the same reason – what the ancients called "sacred geometry".

Whether in art or nature, certain geometric proportions appeal naturally to the eye. Others seem inharmonious. It is a matter of scientific fact. The ancient Greeks and Romans, and the masters of the Renaissance, knew about the rules of correct proportion and applied them in their art and architecture.

Our age has distinguished itself by forgetting them. But when all the impressionisms, expressionisms and sensualisms have run their course, visual art that obeys the timeless laws of sacred geometry will maintain its magical appeal.

The 33-year-old sculptor Charles Hadcock is almost unique in his observance of the rules of correct proportion.

His reward came last year when *Passacaglia*, his 20-tonne, 5-metre high abstract sculpture in cast

iron, was permanently installed on Brighton beach.

Instead of inspiring derision from the customers of the nearby candyfloss and shellfish stalls, it left them wide-eyed and full of praise. Passers-by told Hadcock they loved it, but could not reason why. Hadcock's answer – "sacred geometry" – left them little wiser.

Your chance to install some of his sacred geometry in your home comes next month, when he is holding a selling exhibition of his drawings and maquettes at Imperial College, London. The exhibition includes a bronze cast of the maquette for *Passacaglia*.

Hadcock, an RCA graduate, has worked the back of his copy of the *Architectura* of Vitruvius, the 1st century AD architect and engineer who was the Renaissance's chief reference on sacred geometry. His trained eye now spots Vitruvius's celebrated "golden ratio" – that is 1:1.618 – in the most unusual places, even in

the shape of polystyrene boxes for frozen fish. By chance, he bumped into the designer of the boxes, who had never heard of the golden ratio and told him: "It's the strongest, most economical shape – and it looks good".

Hadcock's use of sacred



geometry is not always so obvious. He sometimes applies the "golden ratio" to the shape of the space between forms, as well as to the forms themselves, or deviates slightly from it so that the sculpture seems to be striving to achieve geometric perfection.

Despite the mysticism that has surrounded it since the Renaissance, the golden ratio is mathematically very simple. Take a pencil, draw a line, and divide it unequally with a dot, such that the proportion of the smaller bit of line to the longer bit equals the proportion of the longer bit to the line as a whole. That is the golden ratio.

If you draw a "golden rectangle" – that is, one whose long and short sides are in this ratio to one another – you will find that its interior can be divided into a perfect square plus a rectangle of the same golden proportion. If you do this repeatedly – in theory, ad infinitum – you will soon recognise the spirals

of the Nautilus shell and the sunflower head.

For the mathematically inclined, the ratio is actually 1:1.6180339... an "irrational" number; that is, one that goes on for ever. Perhaps it is magic, after all. The more practical-minded prefer the rule-of-thumb interpretation, which is 8:13.

In Hadcock's *Passacaglia*, one arm is 1.618 the size of the smaller arm. There is tension between the two because, although at first glance they appear to be trying to complete a circle, they are too far apart and their curves are not circular but logarithmic – the pure accelerating curve of the Nautilus.

Exhibition prices: drawings from £700, maquettes from £1,500. The *Passacaglia* maquette is £3,000.

Charles Hadcock, Drawings and Maquettes, 3-23 Feb, Tues-Sun (11am-6pm), at the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, The Gallery, Ground Floor, Shepherd Building, Exhibition Road, London SW7 (0171-594 8442)

The Golden Sward — STAMFORD RAFFLES AND THE EAST

Adventures, travels and collecting in Southeast Asia

sponsored by
Standard & Chartered

Until 18 April 99

Mon-Sat 10-4.50

Sun 12-5.50

Admission £4

concessions £2

Advance booking

01753 840 1111

BRITISH MUSEUM

Great Russell Street London WC1

0171 323 8789



HEALTH

Crohn's disease causes chronic intestinal inflammation, and affects thousands. One expert says it is caused by bacteria in cows' milk, and is curable. The medical profession is divided. By Liz Bestie



Jordan Lane and his mother, Lesley. 'From being a thin and wasted young lad, he is completely healthy and has never drunk cows' milk again'

Keith Dobney

A split over the milk

In the next few months, Infliximab, another new drug for the treatment of Crohn's disease, will come on to the market in the UK. It is being heralded by many in the medical establishment as a breakthrough in the treatment of this condition, which affects more than 40,000 people in the UK.

But one London professor believes that the disease is caused by a bacterium that can be found in the milk being poured into beakers and breakfast bowls across the land every morning. And he is not the only expert who feels that Infliximab is just another treatment that suppresses the symptoms of Crohn's disease but does not tackle its causes.

Crohn's disease most commonly affects the small intestine and colon, causing ulceration along the gut that results in intense pain, diarrhoea, bleeding, weight loss and tiredness. For most Crohn's sufferers, the best they can hope for is steroids or anti-inflammatory drugs such as Infliximab. However, even with this treatment about 75 per cent of patients still require surgery at some stage in their lives, and even surgery does not cure the disease.

John Hermon-Taylor, professor of surgery at St George's Hospital in London, who has a special interest in molecular and cellular science, believes the causes of Crohn's disease are starting us in the face. He has been working on the disease since the Seventies and believes it is caused by an organism called *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (M paratub), which is also responsible for Johne's disease in cattle and sheep.

The bug, which is very similar to tuberculosis, is found in domestic species and wild animals all over Europe and North America and has increased significantly over the course of this century because of intensive

farming methods. It has learnt to live in the intestines of animals and causes chronic inflammation of the gut," he says. "The bug is then shed by the infected animals into their milk, which is passed on to humans."

A recent study funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) showed that out of 31 cartons of milk from 16 pasteurisation plants, six cartons tested positive for M paratub. "If we want to get rid of M paratub in milk, we need to be pasteurising milk at a higher temperature than we do for TB," says Prof Hermon-Taylor.

"As for the treatment of Crohn's, although the bug is similar to TB it is not affected by anti-tuberculosis drugs. However, we have discovered that this bug can be successfully killed off with a combination of two specific antibiotic drugs, rifabutin and clarithromycin. This treatment is effective in 80 per cent of all cases of Crohn's disease."

Prof Hermon-Taylor's research has been duplicated in Houston, where Dr David Graham conducted a controlled trial looking at the efficacy of clarithromycin as a treatment for Crohn's. They randomly assigned 17 people with severe Crohn's to receive either simple conventional therapy, or therapy with antibiotics. Forty per cent of the patients on antibiotics became well and stayed well for up to three years.

So why is medical opinion so divided on the causes of Crohn's disease and its treatment? One reason is that M paratub is almost impossible to detect, as it "hides" within human cells.

"You can't see it down a microscope or culture it in a laboratory, and immunological tests don't detect it either," says Prof Hermon-Taylor. "The only way you can detect it is by revealing the presence of its DNA, and even then the test has to be done extremely accurately."

Dr Derek Jewell, senior gastro-



Jordan is living proof that M paratub can cause Crohn's disease - and that it can be killed off with the use of these drugs'

enterologist at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, is sceptical about Hermon-Taylor's research. "Professor Hermon-Taylor's original paper showed up M paratub in about two-thirds of patients with Crohn's disease, but the specificity of the trial was questionable. Although his work seems very convincing, the concern is that the test has never successfully been repeated. Some very reputable people have tried to detect the DNA in the tissue but just cannot do it," he says.

But Prof Hermon-Taylor is adamant that his studies have been repeated successfully elsewhere.

"Since 1992 there have been 18 other studies using the DNA test on Crohn's and nine say it's there and nine say it's not. And all the doctors are arguing like a tree full of parrots."

However, at the University of Central Florida researchers have now perfected a blood test for M paratub in human beings, and in a recent study 92 per cent of people with Crohn's tested positive.

One person who is in no doubt about the link between M paratub and Crohn's disease is Lesley Lane. Ten years ago her son Jordan was out playing football with his mates. When he came indoors he had a swelling on the side of his neck. The GP diagnosed infected lymph nodes. But after two weeks he was taken to Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge for tests.

"I was told he had Hodgkin's lymphoma and signed the form to remove the lump," says Lesley. "Three days later they told me it wasn't Hodgkin's, but a form of TB."

A few weeks later the lump came up again and they removed it. Jordan was put on anti-tuberculosis drugs but they didn't work. He had to have more lumps removed and then he seemed fine until 1993, when he suddenly started to get severe abdominal pain and diarrhoea. He lost weight rapidly and was tired and listless. "He looked as if he was wasting away," says Lesley. He was referred to a paediatrician, Dr Nick Barnes, at Addenbrookes. "He recommended we go and see Prof Hermon-Taylor. When he asked me if I was prepared to travel, I said I would go to the ends of the earth if it would make Jordan better."

Prof Hermon-Taylor had already been sent a sample of tissue from Jordan's lump. "He showed us some pictures of cows and pointed to one in particular that looked particularly sick and anorexic. He then explained that the DNA from the cow matched the DNA from Jordan's lump, and told

us he thought that Jordan had Crohn's caused by M paratub. It was the first time anyone had explained Jordan's illness in a way that made perfect sense," says Lesley.

"He told us that the combination of these two antibiotics would cure the problem, but Jordan was never allowed to drink cows' milk again. He was totally honest about the drugs. They had only ever been tried on adults, and they could make Jordan feel ill. But Jordan was so keen to get well, he was prepared to try anything."

Today, Jordan is a strapping 17-year-old, in his first job as a trainee accountant. "From being a thin and wasted young lad, he is completely healthy, and has never drunk cows' milk again. I would advise anyone who has Crohn's to give this treatment a try. I am totally in Prof Hermon-Taylor's debt," says Lesley.

Dr Barnes is also delighted with Jordan's progress. "Jordan is living proof that M paratub can cause Crohn's disease, and that it can be killed off with these drugs. Far from being a rare case, I believe we are seeing more and more M paratub in the community. My wife is a GP in a practice of around 14,000 patients. Out of the 25 who have Crohn's disease, at least half have a story similar to Jordan's which can be traced to M paratub," says Dr Barnes. "If I got Crohn's disease today, I would go on the drug treatment like a shot."

Prof Hermon-Taylor has the last word. "We know that in 1999 about 4,000 people will come down with Crohn's disease, which will ruin their lives. In the first half of this century, we dealt with TB in cattle. It's time we now dealt with M paratub before it becomes an epidemic," he says.

For further information on Crohn's disease contact the National Association for Colitis and Crohn's Disease on 01727 844296

Innumeracy breeds fear

IF YOU held a lunch party and 24 people turned up what would you reckon the chances were that two of them shared the same birthday? A hundred to one? No. Fifty to one? Nope. The answer, according to my Sixties edition of Ripley's *Believe It or Not*, is 50-50. In other words, at roughly half of all events attended by 24 people, two of those present will celebrate the anniversary of their birth on the same day.

So what? Well, to most people, myself included, this comes as a surprise. And it illustrates how poor we are at making judgements involving statistics. That is why bookmakers enjoy a good living. It also explains how figures can be used to frighten people.

The best example is breast cancer, a disease that women, understandably, fear more than any other. I say "understandably" because the figures handed about - one in nine women will get the disease and one in 12 will die of it - make it sound frighteningly common. But it is important, both for women's health and for what we as a nation decide to invest in, that we have a clear perspective on the risks.

An excellent review in a recent *New England Journal of Medicine* spells out just what the one in nine figure means. For any group of nine women, breast cancer will develop in one of them at some time in her life, but not in the remaining eight.

Most women tend to interpret this risk as a short-term probability and grossly overestimate their chances of falling victim over any 10-year period. A woman entering her thirties has a one in 250 chance of developing the disease in the next decade. In her forties it is one in 77. Although the risk of contracting breast cancer increases with age, the risk in any decade never exceeds one in 34.

Breast cancer is only one risk among many, so it needs to be set in the context of other risks. At any age, the cause of death among women is always likely to be something other than breast cancer. In fact, although the incidence of the disease increases with age, the proportion of deaths caused by

HEALTH CHECK



JEREMY LAURANCE

breast cancer never exceeds 20 per cent.

To illustrate this, the authors used a life table based on figures from the Ontario Cancer Registry. Of 1,000 women born in the same year, an average of 17 will die by the age of 40, none of them from breast cancer. In their forties and fifties, 54 will die - nine from breast cancer and nine from heart disease and stroke. In their sixties and seventies 305 women will die, 105 from heart disease and 18 from breast cancer.

By the age of 85, 203 women will have died of heart disease and 33 of breast cancer. However, 99 will have developed the disease, approaching the one in nine statistic.

This demonstrates how heart disease and stroke exact a far greater toll than breast cancer. Yet a survey by the National Council on Ageing in the US found that just 9 per cent of women said the condition they feared most was heart disease compared with 61 per cent who said cancer (mainly breast cancer), and there is no reason to suppose that British perceptions would be different.

This distorted view may have important consequences for women's health. Aside from the obvious point that they can, if they are so minded, do something to reduce their risk of heart disease, by changing their lifestyle, women who might benefit from HRT may choose not to take it because of their fear of breast cancer.

Breast awareness campaigns typically use images of young women and are targeted at 20-40-year-old readers of women's magazines. But two facts are worth stressing. Breast cancer is predominantly a disease of older women; and for most of them it is not lethal.

HOLLAND & BARRETT

Norwegian COD LIVER OIL 410 mg

A Natural Source of Vitamins A & D

A popular natural source of the A & D vitamins which help maintain bones and a healthy immune system. Vitamin A assists in many other functions in the body such as eyesight and skin maintenance.

Cod Liver Oil also contains several important fatty acids which are not commonly found in other vitamin A & D supplements.

£1.99
100 CAPSULES



HOLLAND & BARRETT

We Guarantee Everyday Low Prices. By manufacturing our own products we can keep everyday prices low. We aim to be up to 30% cheaper than our competitors on all directly comparable products. Over 420 Stores Nationwide. Subject to Availability.

The yoghurt cure that's also a killer

'Friendly' gut bacteria offer a radical alternative to antibiotics. By Charles Arthur

SURGEONS IN Sweden are helping people to recover from major surgery by adding bacteria to their gut, rather than using antibiotics which kill off both beneficial and harmful bacteria. This could ease the growing problem of antibiotic resistance in hospitals.

The system, developed by Bengt Jeppsson, professor of surgery at University Hospital in Malmö, feeds patients with live bacteria normally found in cheeses and fermented vegetables, in order to encourage their growth in the intestine. At least six people who were in intensive care, and some children with recurrent intestinal infections, have been cured by the

use of such "probiotic" treatment. A total of 300 are now being tested in clinical trials to last through 1999.

"It's a completely new concept," said Prof Jeppsson. "The lactobacillus [is] important for healing ulcers and other wounds in the bowel. When we artificially increase the amount of them in the bowel, they suppress the pathogenic bacteria - which also means that you don't have to use antibiotics."

Most people think of bacteria as harmful, an image encouraged by adverts for household cleaners. But only a tiny proportion pose any risk; many more play a positive role.

At present, people facing

major surgery are first starved (to prevent choking while under anaesthetic), then fed on intravenous drips after the operation. Bacteria that normally thrive in the gut die off, while the lining of the intestine becomes more permeable as the body increasingly tries to absorb nutrients. This raised permeability can let dangerous pathogens pass into the bloodstream, to cause organ failure or blood poisoning.

To avoid this, post-operative patients are often given antibiotics. But these indiscriminately kill off both beneficial and harmful bacteria - and leave antibiotic-resistant pathogens unaffected.

Professor Jeppsson said, "The theory is that in ancient times we had to store foods using fermentation products. That let these bacteria into the gut... dogs that bury bones get a constant supply of bacteria from the breakdown of the tissues. Many other animals do the same thing... our food intake now includes too little of these helpful bacteria."

The introduction of the probiotic system is taking a long time, though. The first tests, on six people who were on antibiotics in intensive care and showing signs of organ failure, were carried out in 1994. All made a full recovery.

"It is frustrating, but as soon

as we have the full results we could implement this straightaway," said Prof Jeppsson.

A replacement for standard antibiotic use is sorely needed. Earlier this year British doctors were criticised by a House of Commons Select Committee for over-prescribing antibiotics for routine infections - including viruses, against which they have no effect. Meanwhile more hospital patients are falling ill with MRSA, a resistant strain of staphylococcus.

The probiotic approach to surgery has not been tested in Britain, but doctors at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge are using it as a treatment for irritable bowel syndrome.

7 IN 10 CHILDREN
SURVIVE LEUKAEMIA.
BUT ONLY 3 IN 10 ADULTS.
In help or send a donation contact
43 GREAT ORMOND STREET
LONDON WC1N 3AU
0171 405 0101
Phone open calls to 112
Registered Charity 211032

S.A.D.
SAD is Seasonal
Affective Disorder
or Winter
Depression. For
an information pack about
SAD and details of light
therapy and our exclusive
HOME TRIAL system, please
get in touch.

Outside in, (the Body Check Company),
Freephone 1071 904 Cambridge CB3 7BR
01223 511555 www.bodycheck.co.uk

BRITISH
MUSEUM

Is your therapist a friend?

A good counsellor offers many of the qualities you might look for in a friendship. By Paul Gordon

One of the comments that most annoys psychotherapists and counsellors is that therapy is "just like talking to a friend". It's annoying because it's saying that, really, there is nothing special to what we as therapists do - anyone can do it - and there's the implication, too, that really it's all a bit self-indulgent. I have taken issue with such remarks more times than I care to remember.

And yet, I have come to think that there may be more to such remarks than insult or ignorance. Therapy is, I believe, much more akin to a form of friendship than it is to anything else. What is being expressed when people compare therapy and friendship is a belief in what friends should be able to do, what friendship might consist of - and a complaint of what it too often does not. Think of the elements of a good friend. He is someone who has our interests at heart, who has a sense of our history and who respects us. She does not suspend criticism, but is nevertheless tactful. He is someone who can stand back from what we are describing, who can talk honestly and openly to us, who has time for us, who is attentive and thoughtful and appreciative and can keep his own



Lying around chatting to your friends is great, but lying on the couch talking to your therapist can be an equally rewarding relationship London Features

feelings out of, say, any predicament that we might be describing. These are, to be sure, ideal qualities. Anyone who has them is lucky indeed; their friends are luckier still. But they are, I suspect, what we long for in ourselves as in others. Are they not also the qualities, or some of them, of a good therapist? I believe they are.

"A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before him I may think aloud," said the philosopher and writer Ralph Waldo Emerson. And this, precisely, is what therapy is about, an opportunity to voice your thoughts, however abhorrent, unacceptable, unformed, confused or painful you might think them, without fear of judgement or retribution. You voice them in the hope that you will be understood, and so come to a deeper self-understanding.

To say that therapy is a form of friendship is not to suggest that therapists invite their patients or clients to the cinema, to come for a meal, to ring up and discuss a television programme, to give us presents on our birthdays, and so on. The word to be emphasised here is "form". Not all friendships are the same. There is the friendship of lovers, of family, of colleagues, and of many different degrees, of the people we call friends. Each has its own boundaries and conventions, its own sense of what is appropriate.

The negotiation of these regulations and conventions in a friendship is, of course, a struggle and a challenge for both parties, and it is to do with whether a person wants, or can even tolerate, the degree of closeness and intimacy desired and offered. So, too, must you deal with the disappointments and differences inevitable when two people try to meet each other.

There is, of course, a major difference between most forms of friendship and therapy. A social friendship that does not involve a degree of reciprocity, at least over time, is unsustainable. A lack of reciprocity is, I suspect, why so many friendships founder on a reef of resentment of one kind or another. Therapy, on the other hand, is not reciprocal. As a therapist, I am there for the other person and responsible to them; they are not

for me. But this does not make the relationship any less a friendship, and it does not preclude a reciprocity if this seems appropriate, in the sense of a sharing of your experience or thought.

The fact that one often pays for therapy is a sign that the relationship has its limits, a statement that it is ultimately a professional relationship. And yet, all the qualities of a good friendship - a welcome, an acceptance, an attunement, an attentiveness, a suspension of self-interest, a questioning, a criticism, a distance that does not yet pretend to objectivity, a faith in the other, a commitment to truthfulness, and above all perhaps a responsibility to the other - these surely are the qualities also of an ethical therapy.

In the end, however, these can no more be a guide than there could be a guide to friendship. The content and the form of a particular therapeutic relationship - just as the

content and form that cannot be prescribed in advance but must, if they are to be meaningful, be negotiated by the people involved. In the end, whatever the style or orientation of the particular therapist, therapy is a relationship, or at least the offer of one.

Paul Gordon is a psychotherapist and author of *Face to Face - Therapy as Ethics*, published by Constable, price £15.99

Don't worry about weight gain when you're taking HRT

CAN YOU explain why I should have put on weight since I have been on a low dose of oestrogen for HRT? I am 60 and I swim 250m nearly every day, walk everywhere and eat lots of fresh fruit and veg and little fat, salt and sugar. My appetite has not changed and I eat no more; indeed I drink less alcohol than before I started HRT. Why does oestrogen cause weight to go up, and what can I do about it? Women who are thinking about starting hormone replacement therapy are often concerned that

it will make them put on weight. The best research into this is the Postmenopausal Estrogen and Progestin Intervention (with apologies for the American terminology), which compared the weight of women who took a placebo with women who took various types of HRT over a period of three years.

This study found that women who took a placebo gained more weight than women who took HRT. Women who took no hormones had an average weight gain of 4.6lb, while women who took HRT gained between 1.5

and 2.9lb. The lowest weight gains were recorded by women who took oestrogen on its own. Women who took HRT preparations containing both oestrogen and progesterone gained slightly more. So, the scientific evidence is that HRT does not cause weight gain. Keep up the exercise, continue with a low-fat healthy diet, and reduce your calorie intake a little more.

I AM a male in my late forties. At what age should I ask my GP for a prostate check? It is terribly difficult to give a

A QUESTION OF HEALTH

DR FRED KAVALIER

simple, straightforward answer to this question. There is certainly no need to check for non-cancerous enlargement of the prostate gland unless you are beginning to get symptoms. The common symptoms are a slow and weak urinary stream, and difficulty in starting or stopping the urinary stream. If you are worrying about cancer of the prostate, you are probably thinking of having a PSA test, which is a blood test that can pick up early signs of prostate cancer. But the PSA test is often unreliable - some people will

have raised PSA levels even though they do not have cancer, and some people with cancer will have normal levels of PSA.

The best way to find out more about the PSA test is to read *Screening for prostate cancer: Information for men considering or asking for PSA tests*. This is published by the NHS Centre for Review and Dissemination at the University of York. You can get a copy from the NHS Information Service on 0800 665544, or on the Internet at <http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/ord/patprostat.htm>.

IS IT too late to have a flu vaccination? The mini-epidemic of flu has probably passed its peak, but it is certainly not too late to have a flu jab, particularly if you are elderly or suffer from a chronic disease, such as asthma or bronchitis.

Please send questions to A Question of Health, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL; fax 0171-293 2182; or e-mail to health@independent.co.uk. Dr Kavalier cannot respond personally to questions.

CLASSIFIED

Public Notices

OPRAF

RAILWAYS ACT 1993
PROPOSAL TO CLOSE PART OF THE NETWORK

The Franchising Director gives notice under Section 39 of the Railways Act 1993 that with effect from 31 March 1999 Railtrack PLC proposes to close the following part of the network:

network comprising the siding adjacent to Collier Lane, Carlisle.

The Franchising Director supports this proposal.

Objections to the proposed closure may be made, preferably in writing, within six weeks of 26th January 1999, i.e. by 9th March 1999 with:- Ms Teresa Perchard, Passenger Services Group, Office of the Rail Regulator, 1 Waterhouse Square, 138-142 Holborn, London EC1N 2ST. Telephone: 0645 645625 (all calls charged at local rate). Facsimile: 0171 282 2043.

The Rail Regulator may make objections public or copy them to the operator proposing the closure.

A statement of the reasons for the proposed closure can be inspected on any working day between 10am and 4pm at the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising (OPRAF), Golding's House, 2 Hay's Lane, London SE1 2HB, telephone 0171 940 4261, or at The Rail Users' Consultative Committee for North Western England, at the following address: The Secretary, The Rail Users' Consultative Committee for North Western England, Boulton House, 17-21 Chorlton Street, Manchester M1 3HY or at The Civic Centre, Rickergate, Carlisle CA3 8QG.

Copies of the statement can be obtained by request from OPRAF. There will be no charge for copies.

The Rail Regulator will send a copy of every objection to the proposed closure which is lodged with him to the Rail Users' Consultative Committee (RUCC) for North Western England. The RUCC will then consider whether the proposed closure will cause any hardship and, if so, what reasonable means of alleviating this hardship would be. The RUCC will prepare a report on its conclusions and send it to the Rail Regulator. The Rail Regulator will decide whether the proposed closure should be allowed and, if so, whether any condition should be attached to the closure.

The siding is to be closed in order to allow the expansion of the car park at Carlisle station. This is in line with the Virgin Trains strategy aimed at increasing the volume of passengers using this station. 40 additional spaces will be created, the standard of 70 existing spaces will be improved.

The closure of these sidings will have no impact on any operator's ability to provide passenger services.

CHRIS STOKES
Duly authorised by the Franchising Director
OFFICE OF PASSENGER RAIL FRANCHISING

Independent Hearts

VIRGINIA CHARLES

The professional matchmaking service for people of quality and integrity

LONDON: 0181 488 0025

Legal Notices

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that I, Stephen Lord of Poppleton & Appleby, 22 High Street, Manchester, M4 1UD was appointed Liquidator of the above named Company by the Members and Creditors on 7th January 1999.

Dated 18th January 1999
STEPHEN LORD, Liquidator

Health & Leisure

PERMANENT Weight Loss in 1999

Dr Judy Cron, psychologist and ex-yoyo dieter can coach and motivate you by phone

Telephone 0181 458 0025

Unusual Gifts

A NEWSPAPER for this special date. 1992-1999 most titles available. Ideal birthday gift. Remembrance When. Tel: 0181-525 5222. Or CALL FREE 0500 525 000.

Blood, drugs and no tears

Von Willebrand's disease - hard to detect but fortunately easy to treat - may cause women to have abnormally heavy periods. By Sue Royal

TRADITIONALLY WOMEN with heavy periods often suffered in silence. Now that they are more likely to come forward for treatment, they are providing valuable clues about the incidence of a common bleeding disorder.

Von Willebrand's disease was first identified in 1926 by Erik von Willebrand, a doctor from Finland who noticed a new type of bleeding disorder among people living on a group of islands between Finland and Sweden. Between 1 and 3 per cent of the UK population is thought to suffer from this inherited illness, in which one of the proteins that help blood to clot is at low levels, abnormal or almost absent; but most people have never heard of it.

It affects men and women equally, and can cause heavy periods, nosebleeds, and bleeding after surgery. Sufferers often bruise easily. The good news is that most cases are mild, and easily treatable with drugs or a transfusion of the missing factor. However, it is often difficult to diagnose.

Professor Christine Lee, of the haemophilia centre at the Royal Free Hospital in London, has run a study among women who contacted a gynaecology clinic complaining of heavy periods. She asked them to fill in a pictorial blood loss chart and tested 150 women with heavy loss for bleeding disorders. Of those tested, 13 per cent were found to have von Willebrand's disease.

Prof Lee also discovered that using a nasal spray con-

taining DDAVP (see treatment panel) put down women's blood loss and the length of their periods. The nasal spray is currently available only from specialist haemophilia treatment centres for named patients, as it is still undergoing clinical trials.

Prof Lee hopes to run a second study into the incidence of von Willebrand's disease among women students at Oxford University. "The trouble with von Willebrand's is that it causes ill health," she says. "People can suffer from anaemia, and healing after surgery or injury takes longer and provides a site for infection."

Although it affects both sexes, it is more of a problem for women because of the debilitating effect of heavy periods. And although pregnancy raises levels of von Willebrand's to

normal, they can fall quickly after childbirth, and cause haemorrhage. Men don't usually have as many problems, unless they need surgery.

More than 70 per cent of those with von Willebrand's disease have the mild type 1, where there is a low level of the von Willebrand protein. Type 2, where the von Willebrand factor is abnormal or does not work properly, and type 3 where it is almost absent, are more unusual. Type 3, which is more severe, is thought to affect only 1 in a million people.

General testing is "fraught with disaster", says Dr Trevor Baglin, consultant haematologist at the haemophilia centre at Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge. An individual's bleeding can be influenced by up to 50 factors, including blood group, fear, stress and pregnancy, and the von Willebrand protein level varies in response.

"In some people, even the stress of having the blood test can bring the von Willebrand factor up to normal levels. If a bloke goes out on a football field, and starts running around, his von Willebrand factor could be 100 per cent," Dr Baglin said.

"In surgery, the trouble is that, if you have general anaesthetic and your body is relaxed, your von Willebrand factor may only be 25 per cent."

The answer has always been to take repeated blood tests, which places a burden on overstretched laboratories, and to examine a patient's clinical history. But that could change, as people with von Willebrand's disease could soon benefit from genetic testing.

Doctors at the University of Sheffield's division of molecular and genetic medicine are applying for European funding to develop a genetic test using computers. "We can do the test at the moment, but it is very laborious," said Prof Ian Peate. The von Willebrand gene is large, and finding the defect involves painstakingly sorting through DNA. "If we can find a way of sequencing DNA... so that it is automatic and quick, we can get a precise diagnosis." But it will be some years before the test is routinely available.

"It's like saying you have a car that will go at 200mph. They're expensive to make at first, later on they become more common, and the cost of producing them goes down."

صلى الله عليه وسلم

MEDIA

Ten years after its launch, Britain's first 24-hour news service has won credibility but hardly any viewers. By Sarah Nathan

Switched on — but Sky has its limits

Sky News, the station that was supposed to break the mould of British broadcast news, is ten years old next week. It may be looking staid and old-fashioned, but it now has a solid reputation for dealing with breaking news fast and well.

After a flurry of building and recruitment, as Rupert Murdoch rushed to beat BSB to the "on" button, the station was launched just six months after it was commissioned. It was never the channel that was going to make Mr Murdoch millions — but then that was not its purpose. It was there to protect the Murdoch empire from charges of trivialising communications, of being only out for profit, of giving nothing back. One early employee described it as a "beatshield" to deflect criticism from News International's multi-faceted operation.

To some extent it has remained that to this day. It was a help, of course, that the then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, was such a committed supporter. Early on, she decided to give Sky News, which had actually no viewers, her first big political interview of the year rather than giving it to ITN or the BBC as usual. Indeed after only about a year of transmission, she was reported by Mr Murdoch as describing Sky as "the only unbiased news in the UK."

It was this basic function as a political and PR operation which has kept Sky News going other Murdoch outlets which cost this much for such a small audience or readership have not had an easy time. Sky News cost around £15 million to set up and had an initial annual budget of about £30 million, but it has never crashed downmarket or introduced gimmicks such as the News Bunny to attract viewers.

Indeed the only beguiler of the News Bunny, Kelvin MacKenzie, lasted only a short time at Sky, and

was thought to have left because of his determination to pursue the "weather in Norwegian/topless darts" route to an audience — something which would defeat the whole purpose for which Sky News was established in the first place. After some memorable clashes, including one about the outspoken Tory MP, Alan Clark's multiple mistresses, Kelvin went off to do it his way.

Rupert Murdoch promoted Sky News as a mould breaker. Just months after its launch he addressed the broadcasting tribe at its annual gathering in Edinburgh and bled up Sky News as a model for all news broadcasting. It defended us from bias, he said, because one journalist's opinions would get lost

One source described Sky News as a 'heatshield' to deflect criticism from News International's multi-faceted operation.

in the acres of coverage. He said channels such as his Sky News were less susceptible to government pressure because they were not dependent on the licence fee and that Sky was more likely to do investigative journalism because it did not need to worry about its state-sponsored privileges. This, when seen in the context of his relationship with Mrs. Thatcher or indeed with current Labour politicians, has a certain irony. Whatever the merits of Sky News today and there are many, no-one would describe it as a flagpost for investigative journalism. The station now has an aura of undoubted competence in a rather

conservative style. The format is a close relation to American network news, with graphic boxes, a bluish set and endless straps across the bottom of the screen. It may be old-fashioned: the chaps are mostly mature suits, the women serious and not too threatening and there's almost always one of each. There's little graphic gimmickry and no sensation of presenters dominated by a video wall, the new craze on terrestrial television news. But this simplicity liberates the channel to do what it does best: dealing with breaking news fast when it happens.

The Gulf War made rolling news seem like a good idea, and CNN made its reputation, but Sky's particular strength has always been in domestic, human interest stories. It cleared the schedules to bring us Louise Woodward's trial in all its detail — incidentally forcing the terrestrial channels to rethink how much of the trial they would transmit. Its coverage of the Omagh bombing was fast and well-judged. Most recently, the discovery of the two Hastings schoolgirls last Friday was an interesting example of its coverage and one where it is illuminating to compare Sky News and its younger rival: the BBC's News 24.

On Friday, Sky News came over as the establishment. It may have looked staid and secure, but it was fast-moving and enterprising in getting the rejoicing parents on-air before anyone else. In a sort of weird role-reversal, the BBC looked the brash, immature newcomer. Its presenters are young and jacket-less. They sit in a bright playground of a set and you can see the fear in their eyes. Maybe it's the lasting terror of the new technologies used on News 24, but the presenters seem distracted. On Friday one appeared to lack the confidence to listen to what the correspondent was telling him. News 24 may have broadcast the news of a possible breakthrough



Sky News's Adam Boulton about to interview Neil Hamilton, the former Tory MP (top); above (left to right) are screen shots from coverage of the Louise Woodward trial, the Gulf war and the Omagh bombing

first, but the presenter never noticed and didn't follow it up. Sky was initially slower — stuck in a business programme — but when they picked up the story they really ran with it, using their correspondent to the full, with background packages and rather repetitive library footage.

The BBC trumpets the advantage of having 200 specialist correspondents and thousands of journalists to gather the news, but at Sky at least they can focus on getting the story for one customer: The BBC's Stephen Cape was barely through his

live two-way on News 24 before he was on BBC1's One O'Clock News. No wonder the poor man looked harassed. I only hope he didn't have to do BBC World, The World at One and Radio Five Live as well.

But, however professional the Sky News broadcasts are, its audience remains pitifully small. It reaches just over one million people a week on cable and, even in homes with cable, only has a less than one percent share of viewing time. The station's publicity claims it's seen by seven million people a month in

Britain and makes much of its global reach. The first BARB data for News 24 shows it, rather surprisingly, getting similar figures on cable — more encouraging for the BBC with what is still a fledgling service, but not testifying to a huge massaged appetite for rolling television news. For those working on Sky News, it's just as well the influence and the budget is out of proportion to the number of viewers.

Presenters such as Bob Friend and Adam Boulton pull in newsworthy interviewees and their pro-

grammes are watched in the offices of papers and broadcasters, politicians and lobbyists all over the country. Rather like Channel 5 News, Sky may be content to have influence disproportionate to its viewers.

As long as Rupert Murdoch and his successors are content to take the budgetary rough with the political smooth, there's no reason why the station shouldn't continue for another ten years and more.

Sarah Nathan is the former editor of Channel 4 News

New labours for Chris Powell

How the left's favourite advertising man helped change the Labour Party's image. By Rhys Williams

FORTUNATELY BMP DDB Needham's work is rather more to the point than its name. The agency has just celebrated its 30th anniversary, in some style it has to be said — a record year for creative awards and new business wins, achievements that made it Campaign's least controversial choice as Agency of the Year. It also threw a party.

This is not BMP's style at all. When it launched in 1968, the limit of its ostentation was to insist that the company's name — Boase Massimi Pollitt — featured in red letters on its fleet of chocolate-brown Minis. The agency ignored its 10th birthday, held a staff meeting to mark its 20th, and celebrated its quarter-century with a drink (just the one, apparently) and a slice of cake in the office.

The idea of a party was, frankly, alien, much less a celebration that involved packing out the Albert Hall with 5,000 guests and a cake the size of a garden shed. The other significant moment in the whirl of Happy Birthdays was the announcement that Chris Powell, the agency's public face since anyone can remember, was stepping down as chief executive and taking on the more hands-off role of chairman to accommodate his extra-curricular activities.

Mr Powell, among other things, is deputy chairman of the Riverside Community Health Trust, sits on the board of United News and of a local arts council in west London, and is a member of the marketing forum appointed by the New Millennium Experience Company to act as a litmus group on selling the Dome.

"I've been working on projects outside the agency for four or five years now," he says, "and it was getting embarrassing to have the title of chief executive when other people were running the agency."

Powell, 56, joined BMP in 1969. He was appointed to the board in 1972 and made managing director three years later. He is one of the most re-



Chris Powell: 'Advertising is all I have ever done; it's a bit dull to do only one thing' Phil Meech

spected practitioners of his trade. "Advertising is all I have ever done and it's a bit dull to do only one thing in your life," he explains, insisting that his public sector endeavours are not rooted in altruism, or an attempt to correct the perception of the advertising industry as a conscience-free zone. "Working on a health trust is about as different an agenda as you can get from advertising. It's interesting to work with people, district nurses in the main, much more motivated by the satisfaction of their job."

"But, in the end, I fear I have a butterfly mind. The joy of advertising is that you get to look at so many different problems and put your nose into other people's business. It's a fantastic privilege to be able to do that and give your useless opinions to different people. Although I really can't claim I'm running

around doing good works. It's selfish, I'm politically interested and involved. It's the satisfaction of Powell's interests and hobbies."

Powell is a political animal. From in the family. His elder brother Charles was Margaret Thatcher's foreign affairs adviser; his younger brother Jonathan is Tony Blair's chief of staff. Powell has been a Labour Party member all his adult life and once ran for the Greater London Council before masterminding BMP's landmark anti-GLC abolition advertising campaign in 1984. The "Say no to no say" campaign was never going to prevent abolition, but it alerted Labour to the possibilities of advertising.

"The left had regarded advertising as a tool of right-wing capitalism and something that was there to hurt it rather than help it," says Powell. "I think the right-wing left, such as

Roy Hattersley, had a distaste of advertising, rather an aesthetic distaste, based on a dislike of bra advertising on escalators."

Powell agrees that it was largely on the basis of the GLC work that he and BMP were approached by Peter Mandelson to form the nucleus of the Shadow Communications Agency first at the 1987 general election, then again five years later.

On both occasions, the winning campaigns belonged to the losing side, a fact which Powell finds reassuring. "It would be a terrible comment on humanity if such things made a huge difference," he says. "That said, it probably did help see off the SDP. The predictions made with good reason in the mid-Eighties were that Labour would become the third party. No sane person thought Labour would win in 1987, but the campaign ensured it re-

mained the main party of opposition. It gave Labour the feeling of front-footed professionalism."

If Mandelson was the father of New Labour, then Powell was its kindly uncle. So, does someone who has been so intimate with Labour's communications effort have a view on how the recent fuss has undermined the party's ability to stay on message? "Yes, but not in *The Independent*," he says.

Powell is rather more forthcoming about BMP and its 30 years of success. Campaign produced a commemorative issue that recalls just how many BMP campaigns, characters and slogans permeated popular culture and passed into the vernacular of their time — "Watch out, watch out, there's a Humphrey about" (Unigate); "It's frutty man" (Cresta); "For mash get smash" (Smash); "Tell 'em about the boney mummy" (Sugar Puffs); and "Follow the bear" (Hofmeister).

Awards and praise have been piled on work for Courage, John Smith's Volkswagen and the Health Education Authority's Aids-awareness campaigns. Like their spokesman for three decades, BMP's work is thoughtful, often understated but highly effective.

Stefano Hatfield, editor of Campaign, says: "BMP has always created campaigns that are liked by both the industry and the public. They have an excellent populist touch. Chris sets the tone for the agency's decency. He's not luvvie, so he doesn't raise the hackles. He's self-effacing, but he is evangelical about the power of advertising."

Powell also seems to have a healthy sense of there being more important things in life than advertising. Such as cricket, for example. Legend has it that in the Seventies BMP hired on the basis of cricketing ability. An ad for the creative department once read: "Wicket-keeper wanted. Copywriting skills an asset."

THE WORD ON THE STREET

VISITORS TO Art '99, the London Contemporary Art Fair, are a genteel lot and so were shocked on Saturday afternoon by the sight and sound of a puce-faced man yelling loudly into his mobile phone in the middle of the exhibition hall. Words like "executive" and "the board" were all that could be made out through the man's thick Ulster accent. A closer inspection by one art-buyer identified the ranting man as David Montgomery, chief executive — at the time of writing — of Mirror Group Newspapers. Perhaps this was the moment he learned that his battle to stay at the top of the Mirror had come to an end.

STILL, if as expected, he ends up with spare time on his hands, Monty will finally have a chance to finish that web site he's been creating between swigs of mineral water at high-powered board meetings. At present, visitors to <http://users.gi.hardnet.com.au/dmonte/> are met with the disappointing but strangely intriguing notice that "David Montgomery's Home Page" is still "under construction".

THERE ARE certain offensive words that everyone understands should not be uttered on television before the 9pm watershed — the "s" word and the "f" word. The word "bastard" has always been a tricky one for taste police across the land however. But at last comes an official ruling from the Independent Television Commission tucked away in its latest complaints bulletin. Viewers of Coronation Street will recall that Jim McDonald let the word slip during a recent spat with ex-wife Liz over her affair with his occupational therapist. "Its use



was not gratuitous taking into account the shock that Jim McDonald had suffered," the commission concludes. So that's alright then.

LONG-STANDING chief censor James Ferman became a bane figure of the right-wing press because of his liberal views, but at work he wasn't quite as woolly as has been made out. Ferman displayed an almost pathological aversion to opening the BBFC to the public — probably fearing they're all *Daily Mail* readers. And a Channel 4 documentary to be screened next month called *The Last Days of the Board* was very nearly killed because of Ferman's opposition. BBFC president Andreas Whittam Smith is keen to see the BBFC improve its accessibility and so gave Diverse Productions permission to film. When Ferman found out he rang to protest: "The president," Ferman declared, "is not in a position to give permission." Ferman was wrong but Diverse were still kept out of the really interesting meetings where examiners' deliberations on films — perhaps feeling that prim civil servants discussing who does what to whom with a chicken and a bucket of custard is still too risqué for the public.

Jeff Randall's *Sunday Business* is proving a success, outflanking its rivals and confounding the sceptics. By Paul McCann

Where the FT meets Loaded

It is typical of Jeff Randall that he conducts his interviews in a greasy spoon café called Andrew's. It is on Gray's Inn Road, just down the street from the old offices of his *Sunday Business* newspaper, and this is where this most unpretentious of editors lured many of the 35 journalists who now work to produce his paper.

They sat through what then had to be a sales pitch. Today *Sunday Business* is selling 50,000 copies a week and has gained a reputation for producing not only good stories but also, unlike some broadsheet rivals, stories that are true. Scoops have included the failure of Bernie Ecclestone's Formula 1 bid, and Candover's bid for Mirror Group last week. After just a year, the paper is well on its way to the projected three-year break-even point of 80,000 sales a week.

But when Randall was recruiting in Andrew's, *Sunday Business* was not an alluring prospect for any but the most desperate journalist. It was started in April 1996 by Tom Rubythorn, the maverick publisher-journalist, and lurched from one financial catastrophe to another, losing staff and backers while attracting only libel writs. It closed in July 1997, and was relaunched under the Barclay brothers' ownership in February 1998.



Jeff Randall: 'We have proved there is a market. I am certainly more confident now than I was a year ago when I was recruiting people'

Neville Elder

"When a newspaper collapses, anyone in a secure job is likely to ask, 'why should I risk my career?'" says Randall. 45, tucking into poached egg on toast and a giant mug of tea. "Senior journalists who knew me understood what I had planned, and believed I could build the trust the paper would need. It was the more junior ones who were wary."

Over multiple fry-ups in Andrew's, Randall built a staff largely from *The Sunday Times*, *The Daily* and *Sunday Telegraph*, the *Evening Standard* and the *International Herald Tribune*.

Some say now that Randall was the only man who could have made *Sunday Business* rise from the ashes. A former, and almost legendary, editor of *The Sunday*

Times's business section, unusually in journalism, Randall is both popular and successful. "A lot of people are here just because of him," says one *Sunday Business* journalist. "There is a real consensus in the office that you want to work your guts out for Jeff. Which is just as well, because there is a hell of a lot of space to fill."

Alan Ruddock, editor of *Sunday Business*'s sister paper *The Scotsman*, and a former colleague from *The Sunday Times*, respects what Randall did just in getting together a staff. "At the same time he was recruiting, I was briefly embroiled in the Mirror Group's plans for *Sporting Life*. It seemed to me that per-

suading 50 journalists to leave secure jobs for a start-up title was going to take a very long time. But Jeff managed it extremely quickly. It was down to his reputation and powers of persuasion."

Randall built his reputation during the so-called days of the Eighties economic boom. Where other *Sunday Times* business editors had courted the patrician rulers of City finance, Randall cultivated those who epitomised the brash end of the deregulated Eighties business culture: Sir Tim Bell, George Walker, Gerald Ronson, Frank Warren, even poor Gerald Rafter. He used them to produce a string of City scoops, many of them dominating the front

pages of other newspapers, let alone their business pages.

His favourites include Robert Maxwell's attempt to buy Tottenham Hotspur, followed up with Alan Sugar's appearance as Tottenham's saviour, and, oddly, since it was not a business story, the planned closure of London Zoo. Rightly, Randall is renowned as a news junkie. "I know for a fact he was physically depressed for a fortnight because *The Sunday Telegraph* scooped him on Murdoch buying Manchester United," says a friend.

He started in journalism on a postgraduate course at the University of Florida where he was advised to specialise in getting on, and, with a

degree in economics, decided to stick to business journalism.

His first job was on a magazine covering the arcane world of airline financing. After a stint on the *Financial Weekly* he made it to *The Sunday Telegraph* as a City correspondent. In 1988 he became assistant city editor of *The Sunday Times*. He worked his way to managing editor of business news, which came with a seat at the News International monthly board meeting. "Where I got to watch the maestro, Rupert Murdoch," he says.

Having promised himself he would give up journalism at the age of 40, Randall left *The Sunday Times* for City PR firm. Financial

Dynamics. Despite a £200,000-plus package he was bored, and six months later took a pay cut to return to *The Sunday Times*, as assistant editor, and later sports editor, before the Barclay brothers and their editor-in-chief, Andrew Neil, offered him the editorship of *Sunday Business*.

"It was important to me that the Barclay brothers seemed to understand what was needed. History is littered with newspaper start-ups which were under-capitalised. They all accepted the most optimistic predictions of their distribution, future sales and revenues. There was never any money for rainy days—and rivals such as Murdoch can make sure that rain happens. The Barclay

brothers had an understanding of what was needed—and they've got deep pockets."

Randall was unconcerned that there was no research showing enthusiasm for the paper. "There is no point researching a new market, because consumers say they are more conservative than they really are. Pre-launch research would have told Murdoch that people weren't willing to pay to watch sport and movies on television."

Now Randall has figures to prove his hunch that there are at least 80,000 business junkies in the country, and he uses them like the salesman he is: "The FT sells 160,000 in the UK, and we have a third of its market after 45 weeks—and the FT's been going 100 years. *The Wall Street Journal* has been operating in the UK for 15 years, and has just 13,000 UK readers. So I think we have proved there is a market. I am certainly more confident now than I was a year ago when I was recruiting people."

Randall's growing confidence should see some changes made to the paper. Staff report that at the beginning he was so desperate to dispel the paper's reputation for running poorly sourced stories that everything had to be "triple copper-bottomed with bell and braces". The paper was at first, he admits, deliberately boring, so that it could establish its credibility. The paper was given authority in part by its classy redesign at the hands of the Scotsman Group's in-house design team. Ally Palmer, design editor of *The Scotsman*, and John Belknap produced a clean and modern-looking title. Now Randall is promising rather more "attitude" and intends to deliver a paper where "the FT meets *Loaded*".

A year ago, such was *Sunday Business*'s reputation that Tesco refused to stock it—until Randall phoned Terry Leahy, Tesco's chief executive, and got it on the shelves. On 27 December last year, when the financial markets and much of the country had been closed for four days, 45,000 people still went out and bought *Sunday Business*.

APPOINTMENTS: MEDIA, MARKETING, SALES

Art Director £55,000 + Bonus

London's world acclaimed, award-winning advertising agency, Mother, needs the world's best talent. Only 2 years' old, we have acquired many blue chip clients who have global ambitions. We now need people to help us achieve these goals.

We are very interested in you for this position if you have:

- * Team Management skills and hopefully some prior associate creative director experience
- * A university degree in Communications or Media
- * Been specifically trained in design and advertising art direction
- * Minimum 2-3 years' experience in global broadcast, print and outdoor scene
- * 2-3 years' experience British media market
- * A handful of awards
- * Extensive knowledge of Mac computing with a focus on Photoshop, Illustrator and Quark programs along with internet experience
- * Energy, enthusiasm and charisma in buckets.

Please send a sample or a photocopy of your favourite recent piece of work, together with your CV, to:
Kamgi Chak, Mother Limited,
200 St. John Street, London, EC1V 4JY
Ref: Recruitment/Art Director
DO NOT PHONE

IT RECRUITMENT TEAM LEADER

North London Excellent ££
Our clients are 'Blue Chip'. Our team is bright and proactive. We recruit IT personnel at all levels, both permanent and contract.

Our days are a buzz from early morning 'til early evening.

We work hard, we have fun, we earn lots of money. We want you to bring your IT Recruitment knowledge and experience, together with your enthusiasm to join us as a Team Leader.

Our systems are modern, our working practice ISO 9002 accredited. We speak plainly and our sole objective is to do the business for clients and our candidates.

Do you have what it takes?
Call Sarah Grant on: 0181 922 1150/1160

APPOINTMENTS DIARY

Monday IT, Science, Engineering	Wednesday Finance, Legal, Secretarial	Sunday Public, General
Tuesday Media, Marketing, Sales	Thursday Education, Graduate	



The Grand Order

We are currently looking for highly motivated, articulate and well presented Salespeople to work Mon. to Fri. 9 - 5 calling on Businesses by appointment to discuss the possibilities of membership of the Grand Order.

£40k OTE plus mobile phone, health care and company car (after 3 months)

For further information please call now on
0181 3875010
and speak to Michael Bergin Director or Anwer Siddiqi Director
or 091 551144 (EIRE)
and speak to Martin Lee Director

JOB ADVERTISEMENT
Job Title: International Business Developer
Salary: £80,000 per annum
One of the world's leading communications companies is looking for a 4th member of its international team. The candidate will be based in London and must have the following qualifications:

- * Extensive advertising and direct marketing experience
- * New Business involvement and experience
- * Excellent presentation skills both written and oral
- * Involvement and understanding of company acquisitions and mergers
- * Previous international business experience
- * MBA level Degree
- * Multi-Lingual (must include fluent English, Dutch and French)

The candidate will report directly to the President of International operations, must be prepared to travel overseas as this will form an integral part of the job and must be a self starter and be able to work alone as well as part of a team.

The candidate must possess excellent interpersonal skills and be able to motivate colleagues.

All replies to Box 12973, Independent Newspapers, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

Graphic Designer required for Japanese Advertising Agency.

Applicants must be fluent in Japanese and English, have experience in using Japanese software for PC and Macintosh for design, and be capable of training and supervising Japanese staff.

Salary £18,000.
Send CV to Nikkeisha Inc.,
3rd Floor, 196 Tottenham Court Road,
London W1P 9LD

URGENTLY REQUIRED SENIOR DESIGNER

With proven skills in DTP to lead a design team in the development of specialist Japanese language publications. Qualified candidates with minimum 3 years experience, must be fluent in spoken and written Japanese.

Please send CVs to SATO GRAPHICS LTD.,
118-120 GL. Titchfield Street, London W1P 7AJ

ANALYSIS

RICHARD COOK

A touch of gold from Fools and Horses



UKTV can now show high-quality BBC repeats such as 'Only Fools and Horses'

IN THE beginning was *The Colditz Story*, and frankly it wasn't much good at all. But six years ago this tale of studio-bound wartime resistance was a highlight on the cable and satellite channel UK Gold.

UK Gold was supposed to be a highlights channel, giving viewers another chance to savour the BBC's and Thames Television's finest hours. But the reality was rather different. UK Gold was limited by an agreement with the BBC to show nothing fresher than two years old, and a budget that seemed to let it buy almost nothing newer than 22 years old.

"Calling it UK Gold was considerably stretching a point," agrees Ian Lewis, head of programme evaluation at Zenith Media, the UK's largest media buying agency. "It wasn't above the UK Copper level."

But no more. These days UK Gold is on a roll, it seems. Confirmation of this comes from the Christmas viewing figures.

Christmas is a time when TV viewers traditionally turn away from the arriviste cable and satellite channels for a homely, tried-and-tested diet of Christmas specials and *Pick of the Year* shows.

However, last year during Christmas week the terrestrial channels registered a 2 per cent decline in viewing figures, while the whole of satellite and cable fell by 5 per cent. UK Gold, on the other hand, saw its Christmas week ratings rise by over 20 per cent. In fact a total of 6.5 million adults watched the station over the week.

The numbers are improving from a still-small base, of course—the top-rated show the channel has ever shown attracted just over half a million viewers. However, there is no doubt that this initially much-mocked station is now finding an audience.

More important is the fact that UK Gold is now the leading light in the BBC and Flextech joint venture UKTV, in the vanguard of the Beeb's

ambitious passage into a new world of commercial satellite and digital television. It is, in fact, already the second most popular channel of all those available on cable and satellite, ahead of the sports and movie channels, ahead of the children's channels and behind only Sky One in terms of audience numbers.

In addition its audience is among the most affluent of satellite TV viewers, something that has helped push up the station's advertising revenue by 25 per cent over the past 12 months.

"The biggest change happened last year, so that we have now got access to all BBC

programmes, where before we had to wait two years after transmission," says UKTV's chief executive officer Dick Emery. "And, though the newer they are the more they cost us, it has meant that we can now show great programmes such as *Only Fools and Horses* and *Men Behaving Badly*."

"We are now starting to think of ourselves as the sixth network," adds Emery. "We even launched a big advertising campaign before Christmas, and still only make a tiny operating profit, as we're pushing back revenues into better and better programmes."

For once viewers and advertisers seem to agree with the hype. "It's hard not to say that the BBC has finally got it right with UK Gold," agrees Paul van Barthold, a director of the Media Business advertising group. "If you didn't think there was a place for a quality repeats channel in the multi-channel environment, just consider this. On the *Electronic Programme Guide* that viewers use to pick between their 200 digital channels on Sky Digital, UK Gold is one of the choices listed on the very front page, along with BBC1 and ITV and the other major players."

'We're now starting to think of ourselves at UK Gold as the sixth network'

In fact, so up-to-the-minute have UK Gold's offerings become that UKTV has paid it another compliment by launching a station called UK Gold Classics on digital satellite. This, as the name suggests, of course, is the rerun service for programming that has already been aired on UK Gold itself.

7.25pm

ODEON STUDIO (08705 050007) BR: Richmond Bulworth 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.50pm, 9.20pm. *Enemy of the State* 3.20pm, 5.50pm. *The Mask of Zorro* 12.30pm, 6.10pm. *Meet Joe Black* 12.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm. *The Siege* 12.40pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm.

ROMFORD (08705 050007) BR: Romford. *Meet Joe Black* 12.30pm, 7.20pm. *Practical Magic* 2.30pm, 5.55pm, 8.25pm. *The Siege* 2.15pm, 5.50pm, 8.10pm.

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (08705 050007) BR: Romford. *Enemy of the State* 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm. *Little Voice* 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm. *The Mask of Zorro* 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm. *Meet Joe Black* 12.30pm, 4pm, 7.30pm. *The Parent Trap* 12.45pm, 3.30pm. *Practical Magic* 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm. *Psycho* 6.30pm, 8.50pm. *The Siege* 12.45pm, 3.15pm, 5.50pm, 8.20pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm.

SIDCUP (08705 555131) BR: Sidcup. *Little Voice* 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm. *Meet Joe Black* 3.15pm, 7.15pm.

STAPLES CORNER (08705 907017) BR: Crick. *Meet Joe Black* 1.15pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm. *Enemy of the State* 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm. *Little Voice* 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm. *Meet Joe Black* 12.45pm, 4.30pm, 8.15pm. *Practical Magic* 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm. *The Siege* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.35pm, 9.15pm.

STREATHAM (08705 902041) BR: Streatham Hill. *Antz* 1.40pm. *Meet Joe Black* 3.40pm, 7.20pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 1.30pm. *Psycho* 2.20pm, 5.55pm, 8.25pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm.

ODEON (08705 050007) BR: Streatham Hill. *Bricklayer* 1.15pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm. *Enemy of the State* 12.30pm, 2.55pm, 5.40pm, 8.25pm. *Little Voice* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.30pm, 9.05pm. *Practical Magic* 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. *The Siege* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm.

STRATFORD (08705 555366) BR: Stratford East. *Bulworth* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.35pm, 8.30pm. *Meet Joe Black* 1.15pm, 4.45pm, 8.15pm. *Practical Magic* 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 1.30pm.

SURREY OVALS (08705 988990) BR: Surrey. *Bricklayer* 1.15pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm. *Enemy of the State* 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm. *Little Voice* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.30pm, 9.05pm. *Practical Magic* 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. *The Siege* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm.

ODEON (08705 050007) BR: Sutton. *Bricklayer* 1.15pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm. *Enemy of the State* 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm. *Little Voice* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.30pm, 9.05pm. *Practical Magic* 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. *The Siege* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm.

WALTHAMSTON (08705 902042) BR: Walthamstow. *Central Little Voice* 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm. *Meet Joe Black* 2.10pm, 7.20pm. *Psycho* 2pm, 5.10pm, 8.20pm.

WALTON ON THAMES (01932 525282) BR: Walton on Thames. *Little Voice* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.30pm, 9.05pm. *Practical Magic* 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 4.30pm.

WELL HALL (0181-885 3351) BR: Ebbw Vale. *Enemy of the State* 3pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm. *Little Voice* 3pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm.

WILLOWDEN (0181-830 0822) BR: Willowden. *Green The Prince of Egypt* 4.45pm. *Psycho* 6.30pm, 9pm.

WIMBORNE (08705 050007) BR: Wimborne. *Enemy of the State* 2.30pm, 5.23pm, 8.20pm. *Little Voice* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.30pm, 9.05pm. *Practical Magic* 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. *The Siege* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm.

WOODFORD (0181-989 3463) BR: Woodford. *Little Voice* 2.10pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm. *Meet Joe Black* 2.30pm, 7.30pm. *The Siege* 2.40pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm.

WOODLICH (0181-854 5043) BR: Woodlith. *Antz* 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.10pm. *Practical Magic* 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm.

BRIGHTON (01273-602503) BR: Brighton. *On Connell's Chanson* (PG) 2pm. *Sitcom* (18) 4.30pm, 8.50pm. *The Boys* (18) 6.45pm.

BRISTOL (0114-907 4191) Carresses (18) 9.30pm.

WATERSHED (0117-925 3845) Sitcom (18) 6pm. *Little Voice* (15) 6.05pm. *The Acid House* (18) 8.15pm. *Hammer: The Turkish Bath* (NC) 8.30pm.

CAMBRIDGE (01223-504444) The Apple (SN) (PG) 1.15pm, 7.30pm. *Practical Magic* (15) 3.30pm, 9.30pm. *Man with a Movie Camera* (PG)/Un Chien Andalou (18) 5pm.

CARDIFF (01222-399666) La Grande Illusion (U) 7.30pm. *Bulworth* (18) 8pm.

CHICHESTER (01243-786650) Dr Dolittle (PG) 2pm. *Firelight* (15) 3.45pm. *Dancing at Lughnasa* (PG) 6.30pm. *A Soldier's Daughter Never Cries* (15) 8.45pm.

IPSWICH (01473-215544) *Dancing at Lughnasa* (PG) 2.30pm. *The Philadelphia Story* (U) 2.30pm, 6.15pm. *On Connell's Chanson* (PG) 6pm, 8.30pm.

LEICESTER (0116-255 4854) *Pépé le Moko* (15) 6.05pm. *The Knowledge of Healing* (PG) 8.30pm.

NORWICH (01603-622047) *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (18) 2.30pm, 8.15pm. *Storefront Hitchcock* (NC) 5.45pm.

NEWARK (01924-555131) *Bricklayer* 1.15pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm. *Enemy of the State* 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm. *Little Voice* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.30pm, 9.05pm. *Practical Magic* 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. *The Siege* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm.

ROMFORD (08705 050007) BR: Romford. *Meet Joe Black* 12.30pm, 7.20pm. *Practical Magic* 2.30pm, 5.55pm, 8.25pm. *The Siege* 2.15pm, 5.50pm, 8.10pm.

STAPLES CORNER (08705 907017) BR: Crick. *Meet Joe Black* 1.15pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm. *Enemy of the State* 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm. *Little Voice* 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm. *Meet Joe Black* 12.45pm, 4.30pm, 8.15pm. *Practical Magic* 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm. *The Siege* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.35pm, 9.15pm.

STREATHAM (08705 902041) BR: Streatham Hill. *Antz* 1.40pm. *Meet Joe Black* 3.40pm, 7.20pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 1.30pm. *Psycho* 2.20pm, 5.55pm, 8.25pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm.

ODEON (08705 050007) BR: Streatham Hill. *Bricklayer* 1.15pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm. *Enemy of the State* 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm. *Little Voice* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.30pm, 9.05pm. *Practical Magic* 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. *The Siege* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm.

THEATRE

WEST END

Ticket availability details are for today; times and prices for the week; running times include intervals. — Seats at all prices — Seats at some prices — Returns only. Matinees — 11; Sun, [3]; Tue, [4]; Wed, [5]; Thur, [6]; Fri, [7]; Sat, [8].

ALARMS AND EXCURSIONS Michael Fray's new comedy about a dinner party which is interrupted by mysterious messages stars Felicity Kendal and Josie Lawrence. *Shaftesbury Avenue*, W1 (0171-494 5065) & Picc. Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5]/[7] 7pm, £19.50-£27.50. £12.50-£17.50 (restricted views), 130 mins.

AMADEUS David Suchet stars as Salieri in Peter Shaffer's acclaimed drama based on the life of Mozart. *Old Vic*, The Cut, SE1 (0171-928 7616/£420 0000) BR/V. Waterloo, Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [4]/[7] 2.30pm, £10-£30, 180 mins.

ANNIE Rags to riches story of the optimistic orphan, Victoria Palace. *Victoria Street*, SW1 (0171-834 1317) BR/V. Victoria, Tue-Sat 7.30pm, [4]/[7] 2.30pm, [1] 4pm, £7.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

ART Larry Lamb, Jack Dee, Tim Healy in Yasmina Reza's comedy about art and friendship. *Wyndham's* *Strand*, WC2 (0171-369 1736/£1111) & Leic. Sq. Tue-Sat 8pm, [4] 3pm, [7]/[1] 5pm, £9.50-£27.50, 90 mins.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Lush family musical based on Disney's cartoon version of the favourite fairy tale. *Dominion* *Jotterman Court*, Rd, W1 (0171-656 1888) & Picc. Circ. Rd, Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [5]/[7] 2.30pm, £18.50-£35, 150 mins.

BLOOD BROTHERS Willy Russell's long-running Liverpool musical melodrama. *Phoenix* *Charing Cross Road*, WC2 (0171-369 1733) & Leic. Sq./Tott. Ct. Rd, Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4] 3pm, [7] 4pm, £11-£30, 165 mins.

BUDDY Musical biopic tracing the brief life of the brilliant boxer, *Strand* *Alwyth*, WC2 (0171-369 1733) & Leic. Sq./Tott. Ct. Rd, Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4] 3pm, [7] 4pm, £11-£30, 165 mins.

CHICAGO Maria Friedman and Peter Davidson star in this hit Broadway musical about two murderous women and their nightclub act. *Adelphi* *Maiden Lane*, W1 (0171-369 1733) & Leic. Sq./Tott. Ct. Rd, Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4] 3pm, [7] 4pm, £11-£30, 165 mins.

THE COMPLETE HISTORY OF AMERICA (ABRIDGED) Reduced Shakespeare Company's keenly-paced theatrical history lesson. *Criterion* *Piccadilly Circus*, W1 (0171-369 1733) & Leic. Sq./Tott. Ct. Rd, Tue-Sat 8pm, £5-£25, 120 mins.

DR DOLITTLE Philip Schofield talks to the audience in this new stage adaptation featuring Jim Henson Puppets. *London Apollo* *Hammersmith Queen Caroline Street*, W6 (0171-416 6022) & Hammersmith, Tue-Sat 7.30pm, [4]/[7] 2.30pm, £10-£32.50, 150 mins.

THE GLORY OF LIVING Drama set amongst the trailer parks of southern America from new playwright Rebecca Gilman. *Royal Court* *Upstairs*, at The Ambassador, West Street, WC2 (0171-565 5000) & Leic. Sq. Mon-Sat 8pm, ends 6 Feb, 100 mins.

GREASE Energetic stage version of the hit film about life in an American high school. *Cambridge* *Earlham Street*, WC2 (0171-494 5080) & Picc. Circ. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [4]/[7] 2.30pm, £10-£30, 150 mins.

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Christopher Cazenove and Susannah York in Peter Hall's acclaimed production of Wilde's comedy. *At the Theatre* *St. James's Palace*, W1 (0171-494 5000) & Picc. Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4] 3pm, [7] 4pm, £8.50-£29.50, 165 mins.

MISS SAIGON Musical which re-sets the *Madam Butterfly* tragedy to Vietnam. *Theatre Royal, Drury Lane* *Catherine Street*, WC2 (0171-494 5060) & Picc. Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4]/[7] 3pm, £5.75-£35, 165 mins.

THE MOUSETRAP Agatha Christie's whodunit just keeps on running. *St. Martin's Lane*, WC2 (0171-836 1448) & Leic. Sq. Mon-Sat 8pm, [3] 2.45pm, [7] 5pm, £10-£24.50, 135 mins.

OKLAHOMA! Maureen Lipman stars in the National's acclaimed production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's cowboy musical. *Lyceum* *Wellington Street*, WC2 (0170-606 3446/£66 6466) & Charing X/Embarkment, Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [4]/[7] 2.30pm, ends 26 June, £10-£35.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA Andrew Lloyd Webber's Gothic musical. *Haymarket*, SW1 (0171-494 5400/£66 0479) & Charing X/Embarkment, Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4]/[7] 3pm, £10-£35, 150 mins.

RENT Musical inspired by *La Bohème* and set in modern day New York. *Shaftesbury Avenue*, WC2 (0170-201 2122) & Holborn/Tott. Ct. Rd, Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [4]/[7] 3pm, £12.50-£32.50, 160 mins.

RICHARD III Robert Lindsay stars as the historical villain. *Savoy Strand*, WC2 (0171-836 8888/£66 0171-836 0479) & Charing X/Embarkment, Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [7] 2.30pm, £10-£27.50.

ROYAL NATIONAL THEATRE **OLIVER!** Peter Pan Stephen Oliver's musical accompanies the tale of the Boy Who Would Not Grow Up, with Michael Bryant as the Storyteller. *in rep today* 2pm, ends 20 Feb.

LYTELTON The Forest Alan Ayckbourn's new version of *Strawberry* *Black* *social* *extra* *stars* *Frances de la Tour* *in rep tonight* 7.30pm.

COTTESLOE Copenhagen New drama about the discovery of the atom. *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

NT2000 Hobson's Choice Carol Brighouse's memorable drama. *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY **THE BARBARIAN** The Merchant of Venice. *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

THE PIT *Shadows: Riders To The Sea* & *The Shadow of the Glen* & *Purgatory* *Triple Bill* of drama by Sean Wilentz. *in rep tonight* 7.15pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

EVERYMAN Theatre Abigail's *Everyman* *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

THE STREET OF CROCODILES Bruno Scut's short stories provide the inspiration for this new play. *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

STARLIGHT EXPRESS Andrew Lloyd Webber's hit roller-musical. *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

THE THEATRE **BEYOND THE WEST END**

THEATRE

COUNTRYWIDE

BASINGSTOKE **HAYMARKET THEATRE** *Corse* *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

BATH **THEATRE ROYAL** *Beckford's* *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

BRIGHTON **BRIGHTON MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

BRISTOL **NEW VIC STUDIO** *Freebird* *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

CHICHESTER **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

THEATRE

COUNTRYWIDE

BASINGSTOKE **HAYMARKET THEATRE** *Corse* *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

BATH **THEATRE ROYAL** *Beckford's* *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

BRIGHTON **BRIGHTON MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

BRISTOL **NEW VIC STUDIO** *Freebird* *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

CHICHESTER **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

GLoucester **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

THEATRE

COUNTRYWIDE

BASINGSTOKE **HAYMARKET THEATRE** *Corse* *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

BATH **THEATRE ROYAL** *Beckford's* *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

BRIGHTON **BRIGHTON MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

BRISTOL **NEW VIC STUDIO** *Freebird* *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

CHICHESTER **THEATRE ROYAL** *in rep tonight* 7.30pm, ends 27 Jan, 145 mins.

TUESDAY RADIO

PICK OF THE DAY

COR BLIMEY GUVNOR, a new comedy drama about a cheeky Cockney con-man, whisked out of prison to serve the rest of his sentence rehabilitating a community centre on a riot-torn council estate. Jim Eldridge's *Coming Alive* (11.30am R4) certainly tries to palm you off with a few dodgy stereotypes (Karl Howman, in the lead, loud-hallers every line), but it has an immediately persuasive charm. Our Pet (9pm R2) is not a homage to a hamster but a thoughtful tribute to the biggest-selling British female singer to date, Petula Clark (right), who has now had 50 years "in the business". Sir Peter Ustinov and Honor Blackman are among those providing useful links between the star and her music. **DOMINIC CAVENTISH**



10.45 Book at Bedtime: The Sound of Trumpets. By John Mortimer. 2: Terry Fitts meets Agnes Simcox, owner of 'The Dust Jacket', Hartcombes local independent bookshop. And what is the mystery surrounding Spiky Johnson, current at the Skurfield Young Orphanage's Institute?

10.45 Night Waves. How far is it possible for a country to expose the full truth of its recent history? Richard Coles talks to leading South African poet and journalist Antjie Krog, whose new book, *Country of My Skull*, gives a powerful account of the aims and achievements of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He also discusses a new exhibition of African photography since the 1920s which offers an intimate view of social life in Africa. Plus news and comment on tonight's announcement of the Whitbread Book Awards. **11.30 Jazz Notes**. **12.00 Composer of the Week**. Purcell. (R) **1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night**.

RADIO 4 (92.4-94.9MHz FM) **6.00 Today**. **9.00 NEWS**: No Triumph, No Tragedy. **9.30 The New Recruit**. **9.45 Serial**: The Victorian Internet. **10.00 NEWS**: Women's Hour. **10.00 NEWS**: Nature: Starlings. **11.30 Coming Alive**. See *Pick of the Day*. **12.00 NEWS**: You and Yours. **12.57 Weather**. **1.00 The World at One**. **1.30 Full Orchestra**. **2.00 NEWS**: The Archers. **2.45 Afternoon Play**: Elemental Tales. **3.00 NEWS**: The Exchange: 0870 010 0444. **3.30 The Vale**. (R) **3.45 The Sceptred Isle**. **4.00 NEWS**: The Learning Curve.

4.30 Shop Talk. **5.00 PM**. **5.57 Weather**. **6.00 Six O'Clock News**. **6.30 The Cheese Shop Presents - the Butter Factor**. **7.00 NEWS**: The Archers. **7.30 Front Row**: Mark Lawson with the arts programme, including an investigation into the relationship between piano teacher and pupil - a time of inspiration and self-expression, or fear and loathing across the keys? **7.45 Inner Voices**: 'Finders Keepers'. Written and performed by Rikie Beadle Blair. With David Squire. Director: Jeremy Mortimer (2/10). **8.00 NEWS**: File on 4. Doctors in the United States say more than a hundred thousand people die there every year because of adverse reactions to prescribed medicines. Mark Whitaker investigates the scale of the problem in Britain and asks why we know so little about what could be one of the country's biggest killers. **8.40 In Touch**: Peter White with news for visually impaired people. **9.00 NEWS**: The New Healers. Gene therapy promises amazing breakthroughs in the treatment of human diseases. Rita Carter investigates the practical and ethical difficulties involved. **9.30 No Triumph, No Tragedy**. Disabled activists in the United States talk frankly to Peter White about how their disabilities have affected their lives. **10.00 The World Tonight**. With Anne McKenna.

10.45 Book at Bedtime: The Sound of Trumpets. By John Mortimer. 2: Terry Fitts meets Agnes Simcox, owner of 'The Dust Jacket', Hartcombes local independent bookshop. And what is the mystery surrounding Spiky Johnson, current at the Skurfield Young Orphanage's Institute? **11.00 NEWS**: The Patrick and Maureen Mayhew Music Experience. Patrick Barlow and Ineke Staunton play Patrick and Maureen. They are getting on so badly they are forced to present their final show from separate studios. Even that does not stop them quarrelling. With Peter Jones, Carla Mendonça, John Ramr, Simon Greenall and special guest Rachel Weiss. Written by Patrick Barlow. **11.30 Talking Pictures**. The latest film news, with Brian Sibley. **12.00 News**. **12.30 The Late Book Round**. Ireland with a Fringe. In 1997, as a result of a drunken bet, Tony Hawks hitchhiked his way around Ireland with a fridge. **12.45 Shipping Forecast**. **1.00 As World Service**. **5.30 Shipping Forecast**. **5.40 Inshore Forecast**. **5.45 Prayer for the Day**. **5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today**.

RADIO 4 LW (98kHz) **9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service**. **12.00 - 12.04 News**: Shipping Forecast. **5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast**. **11.30 - 12.00 Today in Parliament**.

RADIO 5 LIVE (693, 909kHz MW) **6.00 Breakfast**. **9.00 Nicky Campbell**. **12.00 The Midday News**. **1.00 Ruscoe and Co**. Fi Glover and the 5 Live team present live events from the big news and sports events of the day, including Moneycheck, and F1's guest in conversation. **4.00 Drive**. Peter Allen and Jane Garvey with news and sport. UK travel updates every 15 minutes with Lynn Bowles. **7.00 News Extra**. **7.30 The Tuesday Match**. Russell Fuller presents coverage of all the night's top football action, including the first leg of the Worthington Cup semi-final between Sunderland and Leicester. **10.00 Late Night Live**. The day's big stories with Nick Robinson. Including 10.30 a full sports round-up. 11.00 News and finance. And between 11.30 and 1.00 a sharp and spirited late-night topical discussion. **1.00 Up At Night**. **5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports**.

CLASSIC FM (100.1-101.9MHz FM) **6.00 Nick Bailey**. **8.00 Henry Kelly**. **12.00 Requests**. **2.00 Concerto**. **3.00 Jamie Cullum**. **6.30 Newsnight**. **7.00 Smooth Classics** at Seven. **9.00 Evening Concert**. **11.00 Alan Mann**. **2.00 Concerto**. **3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths**.

VIRGIN RADIO (1215, 157-1250kHz MW 105.8MHz FM) **6.30 Chris Evans**. **9.30 Mark Forster**. **11.30 Nick Abbott**. **4.00 Harriet Scott**. **7.30 Peter & Geoff**. **10.00 James Merritt**. **10.00 Steve Power**. **4.30 - 6.30 Richard Allen**. **WORLD SERVICE RADIO (195kHz LW)** **1.00 The World Today**. **1.30 On Screen**. **4.45 Record News**. **2.00 The World Today**. **2.30 Women Who Dared to Speak**. **3.00 The World Today**. **3.30 Sports Roundup**. **3.30 World Business Report**. **3.45 Insight**. **4.00 - 7.00 The World Today** (400-700). **TALK RADIO** **6.00 Big Boys** Breakfast with David Banks & Nick Ferrari. **9.00 Scott Chisholm**. **1.00 Anna Raeburn**. **3.00 Peter Deasy**. **5.00 The SportsZone**. **7.00 Eubank's People**. **8.00 James Whitle**. **1.00 - 6.00 Ian Collins**.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN

The favourites Slough further set their mark on the Four Nations Chess League (4NCL) at the weekend with two victories which left them a massive four points clear after six of the eleven rounds. A seven-one win against Richmond on Saturday was followed by the much tougher match against my club, Wood Green, on Sunday - who had done ourselves no favours with a lackadaisical performance against Wessex resulting (just) in a 4-all draw, but were still clear second. Playing Black, I was happy to accept when Tony Miles offered me a draw still in the opening. Further draws followed with a single Slough victory but the match still seemed close after three hours or so since we had pressure on a couple of boards, especially Malcolm Pein's. In repeating moves in a much superior ending to reach the time control, however, Pein did so once too often, allowing Colin McNab to claim a draw. (His misery was complete, poor man, when he learnt that minutes earlier, his beloved Liverpool had let in two late goals to be ejected from the FA Cup by Manchester United.) After about five hours' play there were just two games left, in each of which we were the exchange up and in each of which we were in serious trouble. Although both were saved

the final result was an honourable but conclusive defeat. 3.5-4.5. Slough now have a perfect 12/12 and 38.5 game points out of 48 ahead of Wood Green 8/12 and 27/48, Invicta Knights 8 and 25.5 and Barbican 1 8 and 24; while last year's champions Bigwood (Midland Monarchs as was) have 7 and 29.5. This is Miles's crisp win on Saturday. Black usually plays 4...Bb4+ in this rather obscure line. In the game, he quickly fell behind in development though 7...dxc6 8 Qxc4 Nd6 9 Qxb4 e4 was rather more challenging. Certainly not 13 Qd1?? Ne3+.

14...Bxc3?? was a gross blunder though 14...Bb7 is pretty grim after either 15 Rd1 Bxc3 16 bxc3 when the black squares are very weak or 15 Bxd5 Bxd5 16 Nxd5 Qxd5 17 Rd1 with a dangerous initiative. At the end if 15...Qxd5 16 Rd1.

White: Tony Miles
Black: Gavin Wall
4NCL 1999
English Opening

1 c4 g5 8 dxc6 Nxd5
2 e4 e5 10 Bg5 Qd7
3 d4 Nf6 11 g4 b5?
4 Nf3 Nxe4 12 Be4 c4
5 Bb3 Bb4+ 13 Qc2 Ba5
6 Kh1 d5 14 Nc3 Bxc3??
7 Qb3 c5?? 15 Bxd5 1-0
8 dxc5 Nf6

CREATIVITY

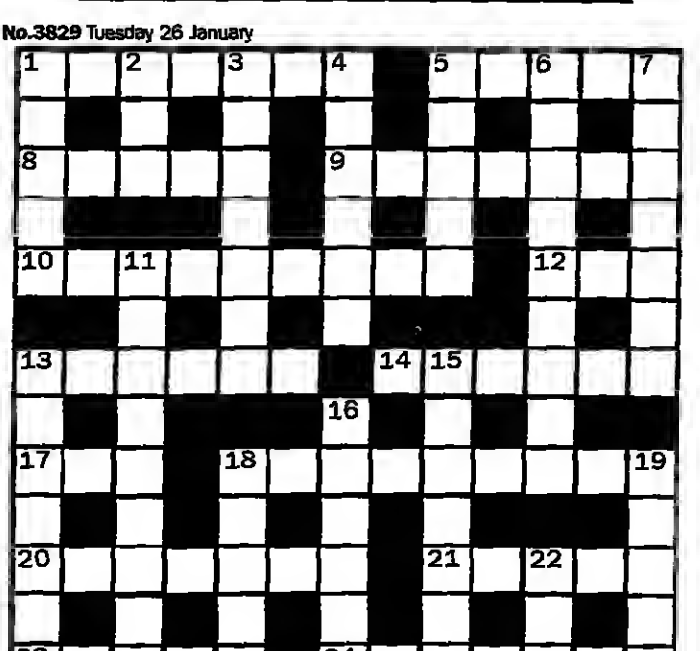
LOKI

MORE LEAP-SECOND Knock-On Consequences: John Harvey reschedules Cornwall's eclipse as that asteroid arrives early and blots out sunlight for 20 minutes every hour, causing an entirely new strain of mad cow disease. And Nigel Plevin is now telepathic, foreseeing Loki's Stonehenge realignment, Carla's space-time continuum and John's asteroid. Weird! So, what does a newspaper print when there is no news? And specifically, how do you use a 450-word Creativity column in a week with no contributions? Minnie & Mal Liszt suggest an aesthetic white space, achieved by typing 2,700 consecutive space bars (taking five characters to be a typesetter's notional "word"); Martin Brown donates the space to the European Space Agency to explore; Oliver Reed builds a space station with 2,700 space bars; Jack Straw makes it a free-fall Devil's Island, with 2,700 space bars on the only window. Les Dawson suggests a game of Blankety-Blank, in which his guests would be Raymond Briggs's *The Snowman*, *The Great White Hope*, a polar bear, Caspar the Ghost, a White Russian and *The Invisible Man*, who would all wear blank expressions and be paid with blank cheques. David Ridge would fill it with pictures of mermaids and their irresistible songs; Nic Coidan with join-the-dots puzzles. Rory Jacques with ink blots, Amanda L. Brock and Julie Orsett with fractals, Roland de Dyce with a Snakes and Ladders board, Maggy Higgs

with pornography in Sanskrit and Martha Maddox with π to 2,699 decimal places. Pierre de Fermat regards the space as an ample margin in which to write a marvellous proof of a theorem he has discovered, and thereby cure Martha Maddox's headaches for the next 300 years. Bruce Bitchall would fill it with Bayeux Tapestry pictures depicting famous Pursuits: Galahad and the Holy Grail, William Rufus and the wild boar, St George and the dragon, Susan Tomes would cut out the empty column, erect it in Trafalgar Square, stand on it, and become an instant tourist attraction. (Grapple fans might quite like a half-Nelson?) Photographic ideas were Paul Turner with snaps of Creativity prizewinners for jealous losers to stick pins in, Mac (sic) Hall with Marie Lloyd, Ted Horne with the *Marie Celeste*, and the Moonies with the Mare Imbrium.

John Harvey and David Ridge win copies of *Chambers Dictionary of Quotations*, as does Ian Hurdley for issuing a timely challenge: suggest further causes for another round of ministerial resignations. Ideas please to Creativity. *The Independent*, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL or e-mail to Loki.Valhalla@btinternet.com by 4 February. Three prizes of *Chambers Dictionary of Quotations* to be announced on 9 February, one of which may be awarded for suggesting a challenge. On 2 February we stretch our imaginations with ways to use elastic bands.

CONCISE CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- Wage packet enclosure (7)
 - Plate for consecrated bread (5)
 - Explosive ingredient (5)
 - Accommodation (7)
 - In an undertone (5,4)
 - Insect (3)
 - Merchful (6)
 - Mammary gland (6)
 - Mass of fish eggs (3)
 - Pub employee (9)
 - Flexible (7)
 - Joint (5)
 - Quarrel (5)
 - Hold spellbound (7)
- DOWN**
- Underwear (5)
 - Still (3)
 - Take a rest (3,4)
 - Whiteocean (6)
 - Clergyman (5)
 - Rear part of truck (9)
 - Leave unattended (7)
 - Moderate (9)
 - Seat belt (7)
 - Vote in again (2-5)
 - Source of wisdom (6)
 - Wash (5)
 - Part of spur (5)
 - Prohibit (3)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword.

ACROSS: 1 Ferry, 4 Hungary (Very hungry), 8 Lumbago, 9 Luce, 10 Again, 11 Linen, 13 Edam, 15 Enrole, 17 Appeal, 20 Arms, 22 Cudde, 24 Atlas, 25 Mores, 27 Upshot, 28 Lecward, 29 Ratio. DOWN: 1 Folage, 2 Rumba, 3 Yeasted, 4 Hoop-5, 5 Nylon, 6 Axlone, 7 Yeast, 12 Jamm, 14 Desi, 16 Coterie, 18 Psalter, 19 Risotto, 21 Refund, 22 Camel, 23 Congo, 25 Ignot.

SATELLITE AND CABLE

PICK OF THE DAY

NO ONE WOULD ever accuse film-makers Jim Abrahams and David Zucker of being intellectuals. But that's their strength. Their films glory in dumb and dumber visual and verbal gags - remember the singing nun whose swinging guitar knocked out a sick girl's life-support system in *Airplane!* In the *Airplane!*, *Naked Gun* and *Hot Shots!* cycles - often aided by the deadpan comic skills of actor Leslie Nielsen - they display an infantile delight in puncturing pomposity. Their uniquely daff sense of humour is celebrated in *The Directors* (12noon Sky Premier).



Surfing with its quasi-mythical overtones, has long been an attractive theme for film-makers. Kathryn Bigelow uses it well as a backdrop for *Point Break* (10pm FilmFour), a neat crime thriller starring Keanu Reeves (right) and Patrick Swayze.

SKY PREMIER **8.00 The Angel of Pennsylvania Avenue** (1996) (2049), **8.00 Stolen Women** (1996) (8033), **9.00 Fly Away Home** (1996) (7258), **10.00 The Directors** (1996) See *Pick of the Day*. **1.00 Hollywood Buzz** (1997), **2.00 One Fine Day** (1996) (4607), **3.00 Stolen Women** (1996) (8033), **4.00 Fly Away Home** (1996) (7258), **5.00 One Fine Day** (1996) (4607), **6.00 One Fine Day** (1996) (4607), **7.00 The Directors** (1996) (7258), **8.00 The Directors** (1996) (7258), **9.00 The Directors** (1996) (7258), **10.00 The Directors** (1996) (7258), **11.00 The Directors** (1996) (7258), **12.00 The Directors** (1996) (7258).

SKY ONE **7.00 Count Duckula** (8133), **7.30 The Simpsons** (4822), **8.30 Hollywood Squares** (2578), **9.00 Sally Jessy Raphael** (8935), **10.00 Oprah Winfrey** (9152), **11.00 Gullit** (8888), **12.00 Jerry Jones** (9173), **1.00 Mad about You** (9044), **1.30 Jeopardy!** (2778), **2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael** (8935), **3.00 Jerry Jones** (9173), **4.00 Gullit** (8888), **5.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine** (1161), **6.00 Married with Children** (4423), **6.30 Dream Team** (5775), **7.00 The Simpsons** (4822), **8.00 Rescue Me** (7263), **8.30 Coppertop** (8773), **9.00 World's Wildest Police Videos** (8922), **10.00 Greece Uncovered** (5573), **11.00 Dream Team** (5775), **11.30 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine** (1161), **12.30 Highlander** (4524), **1.30 - 7.00 Long Play** (500755).

SKY SPORTS 1 **7.00 Sports Centre** (82744), **7.15 V-Max** (6033), **7.45 H2O** (8253), **8.30 Sports Centre** (82744), **8.30 Fast News** (8253), **9.30 You're on Sky Sports** (8959), **10.00 Football League** (8952), **11.00 Thelton** (4623), **12.00 Aerobics** (45423), **12.30 Football** (7077), **2.00 Total Sport** (9404), **2.30 Winterrising** (2048), **3.00 Spanish Football** (82048), **4.00 H2O** (8253), **4.30 Aerobics** (45423), **5.00 Outdoor Quest** (2897), **6.00 Sports Centre** (82744), **6.30 Scottish Football** (10133), **7.30 Fast News** (8253), **8.00 Premier Snooker League** (8978), **10.00 Sports Centre** (82744), **10.15 You're on Sky Sports** (8959), **10.45 Scottish Football** (10133), **11.00 Liza Country** (775), **11.40 Go Fishing with John Wilson** (2593), **12.00 You're on Sky Sports** (8959), **12.40 The Haunted Flat** (55491), **1.30 Highlander** (4524), **2.00 Planet Rock Profiles** (82048), **2.15 Who You Were Here?** (74523), **3.00 Judge Judy** (8253), **4.00 Coach** (8253), **4.45 ITV Nightscreen** (80919).

5.00 Parment (57082), **6.00 Diet Show** (239442), **6.30 Roseanne** (83633), **7.00 Jerry Springer** (61977), **7.30 Mary Polich** (58484), **8.00 Bookends** (679084), **12.40 Animal Rescue** (893024), **12.40 Rescue 911** (105533), **1.00 Special Needs** (235177), **1.40 Beyond Belief** (798044), **2.40 LA Law** (83077), **3.40 Live Room** (78552), **4.00 Michael Cole** (445077), **4.50 Rolanda** (785389), **5.40 Ready, Steady, Cook** (784442), **6.45 Jerry Springer** (61977), **7.05 Rescue 911** (105533), **7.35 Animal Rescue** (893024), **8.00 Murder Call** (789372), **8.30 Film: In My Daughter's Name** (893359), **11.00 Sex Line** (893359), **12.00 Close**.

TNT **5.00 Blow-Up** (1966) (406455), **11.00 Tiki-Tiki-Tiki** (1970) (294733), **1.00 All The Time Young Certificate** (1966) (294733), **2.00 Blow-Up** (1966) (406455), **3.00 Close**. **PARAMOUNT COMEDY CHANNEL** **7.00 Cuckoo** (1982), **7.30 Grace Under Fire** (4881), **8.00 Roseanne** (821), **8.30 Newsradio** (8317), **9.00 Cybil** (87084), **9.30 Vic Reeves' Big Night Out** (8713), **10.00 Frasier** (44794), **10.30 Cheers** (83442), **11.00 Seinfeld** (8320), **11.30 The David Letterman Show** (4477), **12.00 David Letterman** (4477), **1.00 Ted** (9114), **1.30 The Crime** (8253), **2.00 Dr Katz** (8253), **2.30 Soap** (8338), **3.00 Wings** (8338), **3.30 Nightstand** (8338), **4.00 Close**.

GRANADA PLUS **6.00 Within These Walls** (809497), **7.00 On the Bus** (445571), **7.30 Doctor in the House** (445571), **8.00 The My Boy** (809497), **8.30 Up the Garden Path** (809497), **9.00 Coronation Street** (809497), **9.30 Emmerdale** (809497), **10.00 Emmerdale** (809497), **11.00 Emmerdale** (809497), **12.00 Coronation Street** (809497), **12.30 Emmerdale** (809497), **1.00 Nearest and Dearest** (809497), **1.30 Agony** (809497), **2.00 Emmerdale** (809497), **3.00 The Love Boat** (809497), **4.00 The Saint** (809497), **5.00 Emmerdale** (809497), **6.00 Coronation Street** (809497), **6.30 The Love Boat** (809497), **7.00 The Saint** (809497), **8.00 The Jokers** (809497), **9.00 The Jokers** (809497), **10.00 The Jokers** (809497), **11.00 The Jokers** (809497), **12.00 Close**.

WESTCOUNTRY **As Carlton excepts 10.30 This Morning** (8253), **11.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **12.00 Emmerdale** (8253), **1.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **2.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **3.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **4.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **5.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **6.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **7.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **8.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **9.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **10.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **11.00 Westcountry News** (8253), **12.00 Westcountry News** (8253).

REGIONAL TELEVISION VARIATIONS

BBC1 N IRELAND **As BBC1 LONDON & SE excepts** **6.30 Newsline** (803), **10.30 Spotlight** (4477), **11.00 Paddington Bear** (7044), **11.30 Ladies' Night: an Inside Story** (2987), **12.30 Crimewatch UK Update** (29792), **12.30 BBC News** (803), **1.00 BBC News** (803), **1.30 BBC News** (803), **2.00 BBC News** (803), **2.30 BBC News** (803), **3.00 BBC News** (803), **3.30 BBC News** (803), **4.00 BBC News** (803), **4.30 BBC News** (803), **5.00 BBC News** (803), **5.30 BBC News** (803), **6.00 BBC News** (803), **6.30 BBC News** (803), **7.00 BBC News** (803), **7.30 BBC News** (803), **8.00 BBC News** (803), **8.30 BBC News** (803), **9.00 BBC News** (803), **9.30 BBC News** (803), **10.00 BBC News** (803), **10.30 BBC News** (803), **11.00 BBC News** (803), **11.30 BBC News** (803), **12.00 BBC News** (803), **12.30 BBC News** (803).

BBC2 N IRELAND **As BBC2 LONDON & SE excepts** **6.30 Wales Today** (803), **10.30 Wales in a Week** (4477), **11.00 Paddington Bear** (7044), **11.30 Ladies' Night: an Inside Story** (2987), **12.30 Crimewatch UK Update** (29792), **12.30 BBC News** (803), **1.00 BBC News** (803), **1.30 BBC News** (803), **2.00 BBC News** (803), **2.30 BBC News** (803), **3.00 BBC News** (803), **3.30 BBC News** (803), **4.00 BBC News** (803), **4.30 BBC News** (803), **5.00 BBC News** (803), **5.30 BBC News** (803), **6.00 BBC News** (803), **6.30 BBC News** (803), **7.00 BBC News** (803), **7.30 BBC News** (803), **8.00 BBC News** (803), **8.30 BBC News** (803), **9.00 BBC News** (803), **9.30 BBC News** (803), **10.00 BBC News** (803), **10.30 BBC News** (803), **11.00 BBC News** (803), **11.30 BBC News** (803), **12.00 BBC News** (803), **12.30 BBC News** (803).

BBC3 N IRELAND **As BBC3 LONDON & SE excepts** **6.30 Wales Today** (803), **10.30 Wales in a Week** (4477), **11.00 Paddington Bear** (7044), **11.30 Ladies' Night: an Inside Story** (2987), **12.30 Crimewatch UK Update** (29792), **12.30 BBC News** (803), **1.00 BBC News** (803), **1.30 BBC News** (803), **2.00 BBC News** (803), **2.30 BBC News** (803), **3.00 BBC News** (803), **3.30 BBC News** (803), **4.00 BBC News** (803), **4.30 BBC News** (803), **5.00 BBC News** (803), **5.30 BBC News** (803), **6.00 BBC News** (803), **6.30 BBC News** (803), **7.00 BBC News** (803), **7.30 BBC News** (803), **8.00 BBC News** (803), **8.30 BBC News** (803), **9.00 BBC News** (803), **9.30 BBC News** (803), **10.00 BBC News** (803), **10.30 BBC News** (803), **11.00 BBC News** (803), **11.30 BBC News** (803), **12.00 BBC News** (803), **12.30 BBC News** (803).

BBC4 N IRELAND **As BBC4 LONDON & SE excepts** **6.30 Wales Today** (803), **10.30 Wales in a Week** (4477), **11.00 Paddington Bear** (7044), **11.30 Ladies' Night: an Inside Story** (2987), **12.30 Crimewatch UK Update** (29792), **12.30 BBC News** (803), **1.00 BBC News** (803), **1.30 BBC News** (803), **2.00 BBC News** (803), **2.30 BBC News** (803), **3.00 BBC News** (803), **3.30 BBC News** (803), **4.00 BBC News** (803), **4.30 BBC News** (803), **5.00 BBC News** (803), **5.30 BBC News** (803), **6.00 BBC News** (803), **6.30 BBC News** (803), **7.00 BBC News** (803), **7.30 BBC News** (803), **8.00 BBC News** (803), **8.30 BBC News** (803), **9.00 BBC News** (803), **9.30 BBC News** (803), **10.00 BBC News** (803), **10.30 BBC News** (803), **11.00 BBC News** (803), **11.30 BBC News** (803), **12.00 BBC News** (803), **12.30 BBC News** (803).

BBC5 N IRELAND **As BBC5 LONDON & SE excepts** **6.30 Wales Today** (803), **10.30 Wales in a Week** (4477), **11.00 Paddington Bear** (7044), **11.30 Ladies' Night: an Inside Story** (2987), **12.30 Crimewatch UK Update** (29792), **12.30 BBC News** (803), **1.00 BBC News** (803), **1.30 BBC News** (803), **2.00 BBC News** (803), **2.30 BBC News** (803), **3.00 BBC News** (80

Channel 5

3.30 **FILM** *Peer on Trial* (Lamont, Johnson 1975) Excellent, Emmy-winning TV movie about the US and TV Personality John Henry Faulk. His career derailed during the 1950s when he was blacklisted being a communist, but he fought back by insuring with against his accusers. With William Devenera as and George C Scott as his brilliant attorney, Lou (T) (VHS88330).

5.40 Perfect Babies. A look at how parents can correct or even design their babies in the womb during the first weeks of life. Mark Easton explains. (F) (6/28/88).

5.50 Family Affairs. Arnie demands a cheque from girlfriends' staff to tell the boys he's not to understand Nick's needs, probably very wisely. (S) (F) (6/25/88).

7.00 5 News, Including First on Five. National international news with Kristy Young. (F) (6/26/88).

7.30 Wild Flight. Owls and hawks. (S) (F) (6/31/88).

8.00 FILM: The Rookie (Clint Eastwood, 1980 US). Shockingly bad Clint Eastwood action thriller who reheats the old cop/young cop formula to theseod, predictable effect. Eastwood plays a grizzled, a, chewing veteran of the LAPD theft squad who has to become partners with naive rookie cop Charat to investigate a stolen car ring. Clint dispenses th of course, until he's kidnapped by his car, crooked the boy comes to the rescue. You've probably or across children join-the-dots drawing books w harder to follow than this, and not even a suppo cast of Ray Jula, Scott Braga, Tom Sherrill and Flynn Boyle can help. (S) (6/26/88).

11.20 Two (S) (6/26/88).


12.05 The Jack Docherty Show (S) (7/20/87).

12.45 Live and Dangerous (S) (6/5/88), **1.35 Live and Dangerous** (continued) (S) (6/20/88), **2.45 Live and Dangerous** (continued) (S) (7/5/88), **4.40 Premier Call H** (6/27/88), **5.30 100 Per Cent** (F) (S) (6/25/88 to Ann.

TELEVISION GUIDE BY GERALD G

Y

7.00 Robert characters from the a realistic reality o confined to make a lly side on one of his ways a pleasure to strong air of with traps. shes the political background



FILM OF THE DAY



6.00 5 News and Sport (S) (7335981), **7.00** WIC (R) (S) (7) (5530364), **7.30 Milkshake** (S) (455567), **7.55** Winzes House (R) (9261897), **8.00** Have (S) (S) (607888), **8.30** Dappletoom Farm (R) (1500359), **9.00** Weather Front (R) (S) (2207171), **9.30** Russell Grant's Postcards (4236529), **9.30** The Whitney Show (605333), **10.20** Sunset Beach (S) (2651881), **11.00** Lazza (S) (2548497), **12.00** 5 Noon (S) (7) (904717), **12.30** Family Affairs (S) (4924004), **1.00** The Bold and the Beautiful (S) (6538335), **1.30** The Passions Show (R) (S) (9) (S) (200 Per Cent Gold) (S) (9880775), **2.30** Go Afternoon (S) (4059539).

3.30 **FILM** *Peet on Trial* (Lamont Johnson 1975). Excellent. Emmy-winning TV movie about the U.S. and TV. Personally John Henry Faulk, his career delisted during the 1950s when he was blacklisted being a communist, but he fought back by lawsuit with against his accusers. With William Devane as a and George C Scott as the brilliant attorney, Louis (7) (9838530).

5.20 **Sunset Beach** (S) (7) (6822959).

6.00 **100 Per Cent**. Remorseless, 100-question quiz (S) (6703084).

6.30 **Family Affairs**. Arnie demands a critique from Nick's need, probably very wisely (S) (7) (5742838).

7.00 **5 News**, including *First on Five*. National International News with Kassy Young (S) (7) (6939200).

7.30 **Wild Flight**. Owls and hawks (S) (7) (6734220).

8.30 **Perfect Babies**. A look at how parents can help correct or even design their babies in the womb during the first weeks of life. Marx Eason explains (7) (907865).

9.00 **FILM** *The Rookie* (Clint Eastwood 1980 US). Shockingly bad Clint Eastwood action thriller with a rehearsed the old cop/young cop formula to these predictable effect. Eastwood plays a grizzled, a chewing veteran of the L.A.P.D. hight squad who to become partner with naive rookie cop Char to investigate a stolen-car ring. Clint dispenses it of course, will be kidnapped by his car crook the boy, came to the rescue. You've probably or across children's job-the-dots drawing books will harder to follow than this, and not even a suppo- case of Paul Julia, Scott Braga, Tom Skerritt and Flynn Boyce can help. (S) (6862949).

11.20 **Two** (S) (6962323).

12.05 **The Jack Docherty Show** (S) (7302379).

12.45 **Live and Dangerous** (S) (6542821), **1.35** **Live and Dangerous** (continued) (S) (2390284), **3.45** **As Football Show** (S) (7051869), **4.40** **Phenomenal** H (3567759), **5.30** **100 Per Cent** (R) (S) (905538 to 6am).

TELEVISION GUIDE BY GREGORY G.

TELEVISION GUIDE BY GERARD GILBERT